

# THE MIRROR OF TASTE,

AND

## DRAMATIC CENSOR.

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### HISTORY OF THE STAGE.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

#### GERMAN THEATRE.

WERE it necessary to adhere to strict chronological order in the arrangement of this article, it would be difficult to determine whether the French or German theatre had a right to precedence. The German drama, however, has of late excited so much interest that it seems to me rather to claim a preference, more particularly as its title to notice commenced at so very late a period, that the whole of its history will be comprised in a very few pages.

For some time, indeed, the French theatre had no advantage of the German, either in the number or genius of its authors, and the two might be said to travel together in an equal pace. Corneille and Moliere, however, first gave a turn to the scales, and the weight of Racine and Voltaire, completely gave the ascendant to the former. The French rapidly improved, and the German in the same proportion degenerated. In the beginning of the last century, Gottsched, professor of *Belles Lettres*, at Leipzig, made a vigorous effort to re-establish the theatre of his

country. He instructed young actors, and endeavoured to promote a spirit of emulation among the men of genius, and stimulate young poets to write for the stage. Others followed his example; but, soon finding that they wasted their labours on a barren soil, and that all their efforts were productive of nothing great or original, they in part abandoned their purpose; and conceiving that the most they could do in favour of their theatre would be to enrich it with the productions of the French poets, applied themselves to translation; and from that time till very lately, the German stage was wholly supported by the dramatic productions of Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, Moliere and Destouches. The German opera too, once so much and deservedly esteemed, became neglected in favour of the Italian.

Some time about the middle of the sixteenth century, an event took place which circulated all over Holland, and through Sweden, Denmark, and every part of Germany, a sort of taste, and a very strong appetite for dramatic productions. Two societies of rhetoricians, composed of a vast number of persons eminently distinguished as men of letters, jurisconsults and magistrates, joined their efforts to establish a theatre at Amsterdam. At the head of this honourable confederacy were placed Bardezius, a burgomaster, and counsellor. The celebrated poet Polt, P. C. Hooft, and the famous Joost Van Vondel. In the year 1584, the two societies commenced a systematic disputation on various subjects. At first, and for some time, their arguments were carried on with temper becoming philosophers, and suited to such laudable purposes as they had in view. Their productions were only dialogues in verse, on the transient occurrences of the time, on the most interesting national events, and on mythological fable. These were replete with instruction, and served to enlighten the minds, to improve the morals, to soften, correct and regulate the manners of the people, and at the same time to supply them with amusement.

The zeal of disputation, however, in time produced peevishness, peevishness degenerated into acrimony, and acrimony sunk into polemical rancour. Each society ridiculed the proceedings of the other, and their eloquence was made a vehicle for malignant invectives and poisonous satire. From these quar-

rels, feuds and disorders arose, the public tranquillity was interrupted, and the most serious consequences would in all likelihood have ensued, if the magistrates had not come to a determination to suppress them both. They now saw the folly of their conduct, repented, and condemned themselves. The people being unwilling to lose their favourite pleasure, interposed with mediation; and, after a variety of explanations and discussions, the affair was, not without some difficulty, adjusted, and they agreed to unite. This union gave satisfaction to all parties; and in the year 1635, a theatre, in which the two societies were incorporated into one body, was built. Samuel Koster, an eminent physician, who being unable long to support the expense of it, was obliged to sell it out to the guardians of the orphans and aged, to whose use the profits were appropriated. From the benevolence of its application, the institution obtained universal approbation and support, and its original object, the advancement of the drama, was proportionably promoted. The laudable flame now spread itself in all directions, extending even to Sweden, where the drama was established by the celebrated baron de Hogbera, whose character was one of the most extraordinary of the age he lived in, and as such deserves commemoration in the history of an art to which he was an illustrious benefactor.

Baron de Hogbera was the son of a soldier, who from the ranks rose by merit through the successive military gradations to high command, and thence to the nobility. At a very early age he lost his parents, and being so very poor that he could not pay for tuition, learned of himself to read. With indefatigable industry he persevered in cultivating his mind under every disadvantage, but that of superior genius and manly resolution, to make use of, and by degrees acquired an insight into several sciences, without instructor or assistant. At the age of seventeen, he formed the bold resolution of travelling, to acquire knowledge and perfect his studies; and without friends, money, or recommendation, set out to make the tour of Europe on foot. After having traversed Germany, Holland, and France, where he supported himself by instructing the country people in new improvements in husbandry, he arrived in England, en-



riched with stores of various knowledge, gleaned from all parts of Europe. There he remained for a short time, increasing his stock with unwearied diligence, from whence he revisited his native country, and thence proceeded to Denmark. At Copenhagen his extraordinary merit was first publicly noticed.— There he established himself, and there his productions soon obtained for him celebrity and admiration. He first made the Danish theatre, as well as his own fame, by eighteen comedies, according to their time and the circumstances of the country, were entitled to the reputation of excellent.

To the character which history has to give of the Dutch dramas, credit cannot be given without much difficulty, and indeed delicacy is at a loss for words in which to convey an idea of the grossness and stupid beastliness of some of those pieces. "These," says a respectable historian, "for a considerable time made up the theatrical delights of the Mynheers; till at length they improved the stage by translations of Spanish comedies, and French tragedies, originally introduced by a society of Portuguese Jews, who established a theatre, to which the Hollanders were invited gratis, the better to keep up a good understanding between the Portuguese and Dutch in commercial negociations. Their first efforts, however, were clumsy enough. If Calderone was full of extravagance on the Spanish theatre, his *Curvettes*, and his *Caprioles* were, of course, imitated as awkwardly on the stage of Amsterdam, as a guinea-pig imitates a squirrel; and as for Corneille, I cannot refrain from giving one instance how adroitly he was turned into Dutch.

"There is a well known passage in the *Cid*, where the father of Roderigue stimulates his son to revenge; and, not satisfied with the assurance he had before given him, stopping him short, he says, "*a tu un cœurs, Rodrigue?*" He replies, pointedly, "*tout autre che mon Pere le trouvera sur l'heure.*" The Dutchman, determined to be as phlegmatic as the Frenchman was brilliant, has rendered it thus: "*Ap ye a hart Rodrigue?*" "Yaw, papa," cries Rodrigue.

It was not till towards the latter end of the last century, the drama of Germany attracted the attention of the other nations of Europe. In 1766, the merchants of Hamburgh combined to es-



tablish a theatre in that city, and invited to it not only the best actors, but the ablest machinists in France. The celebrated *Loewe* was appointed to the direction of it, and had it in charge to give public lessons on the art of pantomime, and on theatrical action. This great undertaking generated a spirit of national emulation, contributed to encourage and advance the drama; and, what was of much greater consequence as a national consideration, to overcome that aversion which most of the great entertained for productions in the German language. Hamburgh soon became an academy for young actors; and the establishment would ultimately have been of great utility, had it not, unfortunately, been soon interrupted.

The celebrated Lessing\* was invited to enrich this dramatic school with new and original pieces. He was offered a considerable pension to undertake the charge, but he refused it: he was, however, prevailed upon to instruct both actors and spectators by judicious criticism. With this view he began the work called *Dramaturgie de Hamburg*; but in this he was baffled, the vanity of some actors was wounded, and he soon found himself under the necessity of being silent.†

Lessing, however, though he was disarmed as a censor upon the actors, still retained the right of a critic on literature; and, willing to contribute all he could to the national theatrical edifice, laboured to cure the rage of the German writers for servilely imitating foreign productions. He was particularly desirous that they should truly feel how far the rules laid down by the ancients, and particularly by Aristotle, were practicable—rules which his genius informed him, were by some too much insisted upon, and by others too little. This work, so precious, so singular, and so interesting to the republic of letters, was completely stopped by the failure of the Hamburgh theatres. In 1768, that noble enterprise fell to the ground, and the company were reduced to the general fate of German actors, that of wandering from town to town; or, as it is called in England, strolling.

\* For his life, &c. see page 95.

† To those judicious critics who censure dramatic critics for not being severe, we recommend an attentive consideration of this curious fact.

About that time, the celebrated dramatic poet Weisse added to his fame, by a very happy imitation of *Ninette a la Cour*, and *La Partie de Chasse d'Henri IV*, of which he made comic operas for the German theatre. And soon after one of the dramatic master-pieces of the same author appeared, which was *Romeo and Juliet* imitated from Shakspeare. *Madame Schaltz* performed Juliet with so much truth and feeling, that had she never played any other, that part alone would have established her reputation.

In 1767, Lessing published, in two volumes, a new edition of his comedies, to which he added one not published before, *Minna von Barnheim*, the best comedy in the German language. It is of the grave and sentimental kind of comedy, in which the characters carry on a war of generosity, from which the embarrassments and implications of the plot, not very intricate or artificial ones, result.

The leading personage of this drama is a disbanded officer (major Telheim,) whose services had been ill rewarded by his country. He is a man of the most consummate bravery, generosity and virtue; which qualities have gained him the love of every soldier and domestic about him, and procured him a still more valuable attachment, the love of Minna of Barnheim, the heroine of the play, who on hearing of the major's regiment being disbanded, comes to Berlin to seek him, and to make him happy. The rival nobleness of mind of these two characters produces the principal incidents of the piece, which however are overcharged and not natural, nor very happily imagined. What the witty Henry Fielding says, when comparing a shallow man to a shallow brook, may be said with some justice of the characters of the German drama in general. "They may be easily seen through"—Yet notwithstanding these defects, and the want of *vis comica*, from which the nature and situation of the particular characters, almost of necessity preclude it, the play is pleasing and interesting to every reader. There is in the constitution of the human mind something so congenial to generosity, disinterestedness, and magnanimity, that characters founded on those qualities, can scarcely fail to interest and please the majority of mankind, however contradictory to nature they may be, or however critical discernment may condemn them. Much of the art of the German dramatists will be found, on consideration, to rest on the management of this fact; not but that there are occasional flows

of comic humour in some of them of which the severity of criticism must speak with praise. Telheim's serjeant major and valet are of this kind, and are drawn with a vigorous and natural pencil. In some of Lessing's inferior pieces, which are farcical and extravagant, there is a good deal of comic humour and lively dialogue.

Lessing's tragedy of *Emelie de Galotti*, constitutes an epoch in the German drama. The best critics in Germany pronounce Lessing to be the greatest of their dramatic poets, and *Emelie de Galotti*, the greatest of his works. With their opinions it would be vain and presumptuous to contend. To them, all the minute circumstances which constitute excellence in their drama and language, must be better known than they can be to foreign critics. Voltaire pretended, and was believed by the French, to understand Shakspeare, while to any man who knows our great bard, some of Voltaire's translations of him into French are perfectly laughable, bearing no more resemblance to the original than *La derniere Chemise de l'Amour* to "Love's last Shift"—the way in which a French translator once rendered the title of Colly Cibber's comedy. It is not our business therefore here to contest with the German critics the correctness of their doctrine, that Lessing is the greatest of their dramatic poets, or that *Emelie de Galotti* is the best of their tragedies; or whether Goethe, Schiller, or Kotzebue are his equals, superiors or inferiors; but we are persuaded that those who shall read, or rather who shall study *Emelie*, allowing for the difference of genius which pervades each nation, and the kind of drama which must necessarily result, will render justice to this tragedy, and feel the truth, the precision, and the force of its characters, as they are maintained even in the minutest situations, the rapid and animated interest that pervades the plot, and in a word, the numberless beauties that are dispersed through every scene. Yet in this play may be discerned the disadvantage of overstrained attachment to the Aristotelian rules, and all the old ridiculous fanaticism about the unities. Lessing formed himself too scrupulously upon the model of the ancients, and wished to bring the German drama to a perfect conformity with it. The fable of *Emelie*, therefore, as well as of his other tragedies, is more regular than happy, and



the catastrophe is neither so natural nor pleasing as it might have been made.

“After the first reading of *Emelie*, one would be disposed to wonder at the reputation it had acquired; but a second will place it higher in my estimation. This is naturally the case in a performance where the whole is neither so perfect nor so interesting, as some of the scenes in detail were forcible and striking. The heroine is but imperfectly drawn, and not very well supported. Indeed it may in general be observed of the German pieces, that the characters of the female personages are by much the most defective both in beauty and in force. This may, perhaps, be attributed to the state of society in Germany, where the sex is less an object of consideration and respect than in France and some other parts of the continent. But there is another lady in this tragedy, the countess of Orsina, the last betrayed and abandoned mistress of the prince whose character the poet has delineated with great ability; and one scene in which she is introduced along with the father of *Emelie*, in genuine expression of passion, and pointed force of dialogue, may be compared to some of the best which the modern stage can boast.

In the development of the secret foldings of the heart, Lessing seems deeply skilled, and the opening scenes of this tragedy contain some of those little incidents that mark an intimacy with human nature which genius alone can claim. But in its progress we find, in some degree, a want of that strong and just delineation and support of character, but chiefly of that probable conduct and interesting situation which are the great and peculiar requisites of dramatic excellence. It seems also defective in the pathetic, for which certainly the subject afforded very great room.

The next in merit of Lessing's pieces is founded on an English story, and called *Sara Samson*. The plot seems to be chiefly taken from *Clarissa*, though one character in it, that of a violent profligate woman, may be suspected of being taken from *Millwood*, in *George Barnwell*—a hateful character, unsuitable to the dignity of tragedy.

Next to Lessing, in point of name, is Goethe. He is the author of *Goetz de Berleching* and *Clavidgo*, two tragedies, as

well as of a drama bearing the name of *Stella*. The first is extremely irregular in its plan, being rather a biography in dialogue than a tragedy: yet the simple manners, the fidelity, the valour, and the generosity of a German knight are portrayed in a variety of natural scenes. This appeal to the national prejudices of the Germans, is supposed to be the occasion of that high estimation in which it is held, without having otherwise any adequate claim to it.

The *Clavidgo* of Goethe is founded on an incident which happened to the celebrated Caron de Beaumarchais in Spain, who is introduced as a person of the drama, under the name of Ronac, an anagram of Caron, with the letters a little transposed. The distress of the play arises from the falsehood of a lover who leaves his mistress after being engaged to marry her. Neither the delineation of the characters, nor the management of the plot in the first two acts is entitled to much applause; but the last act, which passes in the sight of the corpse of Maria, is wrought up with uncommon force, and must, on the stage, be productive of high effect.

His other performance, *Stella*, is strongly marked with that enthusiastic sentiment, and refined sensibility, which, in the *Sorrows of Werter*, he has so warmly indulged; and in point of immoral effect, the drama is not an atom less reprehensible than the novel. Its conclusion is in the boldest style of this sentimental refinement; since it gives to the hero two wives, with whom he is to share that heart to which the incidents of the play have shown the claim of both.

*(To be continued.)*

## BIOGRAPHY.—FOR THE MIRROR.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF MR. WILLIAM B. WOOD,

*Actor, and one of the Managers of the Philadelphia Theatre.*

Individuals who are constantly before the world, naturally excite its interests and awake its curiosity. The public require further information with respect to them, than that which arises from the professional intercourse that subsists, and they have a right to be informed. In the subject of this sketch a double interest will be felt. Both as it exhibits a gentleman, who has for a considerable time engaged a large proportion of public attention, and as it forms a striking illustration of the effects of industry and laudable ambition in triumphing over the opposition of nature, and establishing a reputation—solid, brilliant and beneficial.

Mr. Wood, the father of our present subject, was a respectable goldsmith of Newyork. He left his native city when the British took possession of it, in the revolution, and retired to Montreal. During his residence there, on the 26th of May, 1779, Mr. William B. Wood was born. At four years of age, he was brought by his father to Newyork, and during the first years of infancy was treated and educated as boys generally are. At the early age of eleven years, he was placed in a countinghouse, not long before the celebrated scrip speculation which terminated in the failure of many respectable houses, and among others, of that to which he was attached. Left to seek his fortune out of trade, young Wood was placed in the office of an attorney where he remained twelve months. Thus early hustled about from school to countinghouse, and from countinghouse to office, it may be expected that our young gentleman was somewhat manly for his years, as he had at least learned a lesson that he must take care of himself. Anxious therefore for something like an independence, he entered again into a merchant's countinghouse, as clerk, at a small salary, with little recommendation, except integrity and the faculty of writing an excellent hand. A prospect now opened for a voyage to the West Indies with commercial views, which was gladly embraced, and in the year '97, Mr. Wood embarked on this expedition. He remained abroad a twelve month, and returned extremely poor—some-



what profligate, and very proud. These qualities, as might be expected, brought on difficulty after difficulty, and heaped embarrassment upon embarrassment, until his career was brought up, (though still some years short of manhood) by imprisonment for debt in the Philadelphia jail. While in confinement, and revolving the various means of struggling through life, he recollected that he had obtained some premiums and praise for his elocution when at school, and he saw through the bars of his prison, an eminence of theatrical fame, which he fancied would readily be attained. As soon as an arrangement could be made with his few creditors, he left this city for Annapolis, where Mr. Wignell was then performing with the Philadelphia company, and presented himself to the manager, full of expectation, and throbbing with the certainty of success.

This was the dawn of Mr. Wood's theatrical life; and never did a more inauspicious sun arise. He was feeble in health, indolent, little habituated to theatrical studies, indifferent as to voice, and extremely young. Mr. Wignell therefore who was a friend to his father, strenuously advised him to relinquish his idea of a dramatic life, but all in vain—the young gentleman “had heard of battles,” and was resolved to be a tragedy hero.

It is somewhat strange that at this time, and for some years afterwards, Mr. Wood never thought of genteel comedy, on which principally his present fame is founded, as a road to reputation; and looked down with ineffable contempt upon every thing but the dagger and the buskin.

After much persuasion, Mr. Wignell, with that goodness of heart which always characterised him, determined to gratify the young man, and George Barnwell was fixed upon, as the proper *debut* of this tragic actor. Wood's figure, albeit, not corpulent at best, was reduced to a skeleton by a recent illness, and he appeared more like George Barnwell a year after his execution, than the blooming lover of Millwood. As the manager expected, the performance absolutely failed. Not a ray of merit shone from the character, and our friend Wood, since declares, that it was the most execrable thing, that ever came before the public. He was however not disheartened: baffled in a great attempt he had at least the consolation of Phæton—*magnis tamen excidit ausis*; and he must perforce clip his wings, and content

himself for a while, with an humble flight.—And much more lowly it was indeed, for during the whole of that season at Annapolis and Baltimore, he figured away in the next grade above message carriers, until his patience, and even his ambition were nearly exhausted. In Philadelphia he opened in the part of Plethora in “Secrets worth Knowing,” and so miserably meagre was his frame, and so consumptive and sickly his hue, that the audience were at a loss whether to consider the player as performing a part, or exhibiting the unaffected symptoms of disease.

After performing some little time with no improvement, and of course with miserable prospects, Mr. Wood’s father interposed and insisted upon his quitting the stage. To this he consented, and embarked a second time for the West-Indies, with the view of establishing himself permanently there. Prospects were now fair, and a fortune would, probably, have been acquired, but that the climate proved so hostile to his constitution, as to force our friend to return to this country. After an eight months absence he re-appeared at home, and wrung from his father “a slow leave” to resume his occupations on the stage. During his absence, however, Mr. Cain had come forward with *eclat*, and had given promise of great excellence; so that the place which Wood’s ambition had sometimes marked out for him, in her most extravagant moments, was already occupied, and Mr. Wignell received him with greater reluctance than before. He continued to play inferior, very inferior parts, principally in tragedy, until accident brought to light some sparks of merit in another line. When the play of the “Heir at Law” was first *got up*, the part of Dick Dowlas was allotted to Mr. Blisset.—That gentleman either thinking the character ill adapted to his style of acting, or perhaps really indisposed, gave it up, when of necessity the part fell upon Wood. He appeared after a few hours’ hasty study and gained considerable reputation in the piece, which was a favourite, and often repeated. This was the first character, that Mr. Wood played really well, and from this time forth he turned his attention towards genteel comedy, in which now he performs the whole range of first rate parts. Wignell in Dr. Panglos, Warren in baron Duberly, and we may add Wood in Dick Dowlas, rendered the “Heir at Law” an excellent play.

When "Speed the Plough," was brought forward, Wood took Bob Handy, and did it extremely well. From this time forward he began to be tolerated, though still not admired. Mr. Wignell, although from the first he considered him a bad actor, always entertained for him the highest esteem as a man. He therefore in the year 1799 appointed him treasurer of the theatre, in which station he continued until 1803. When Mr. Cooper went to England, the necessity of filling up a stock play, threw Wood into the part of Rolla, which he performed frequently, and always with increasing reputation.

In the month of January 1803, Mr. Wignell died: Mr. Warren undertook the management of the theatre, and Wood continued for some time as his assistant or co-adjutor in the task. In this capacity he went to England in June (1803) with a view to recruit the company, that had sustained some heavy losses.—Here was a glorious opportunity for improvement. An opportunity which we believe was not neglected. His taste had been formed upon very imperfect models, and it was difficult for him to conceive an accurate idea of chaste performance from any thing he had seen in America. With an enthusiastic devotion to his business it is not to be wondered at that he carried to an extravagant length, his admiration of Mr. Kemble, Mr. Lewis, and Mrs. Siddons. He attended the theatre faithfully during his continuance in England, and returned greatly improved in his knowledge of acting, bringing with him some additions to the Philadelphia corps.

Soon after his return from England, Mr. Wood married Miss Juliana Westray, who was then rising rapidly into distinction, and is now an excellent actress on our boards. He was thus rescued from all danger of falling again into his habits of dissipation, and henceforward devoted himself entirely to his profession and his family. From this period he has progressively advanced in merit, and of consequence in public estimation. The inattention or ill health of Cain soon enabled our friend Wood to overtake and outstrip him in the course, and he assumed a station of the first respectability on the Philadelphia stage.

In the winter of 1808-9, the labours of the theatre falling upon him with peculiar weight, Mr. Wood's health sunk under the exertions. While performing the part of Charles



de Moor, he broke a small blood vessel, and was for some time confined extremely ill. Before a recovery could be entirely effected he renewed his labours, and induced by that means a relapse which had nearly carried him to his grave. A sea voyage was recommended as a last resort, and he took leave of his friends and embarked for England. While absent, report stated him to be dead, and many who knew his worth lamented him as such. They were however equally surprised and delighted by his resurrection in *propria persona*, and that too, in perfect health and renovated strength.

The winter following, Mr. Wood reaped a whole harvest of laurels, and established his fame on the most solid basis. He played Perez, Iago, and a variety of other parts with great effect. At the close of the season he purchased into the management with Mr. Warren, and renewed the lease of the theatre for five years: so that the Philadelphia audience are secured in their possession of this valuable actor, for at least a considerable length of time.

In the beginning of September last, Mr. Price, the manager of the Newyork theatre, invited Wood to go on and play a few nights there. The invitation was accepted, and the impression made was such as to extend his reputation, and gratify his pride in the highest degree. While there, he performed de Valmont twice, Don Felix, in the Wonder, Penruddock and Rolla. His Penruddock particularly we understand, though seen after that of Mr. Cooper, was universally applauded, and warmly admired.

Perhaps the best piece of acting exhibited by our friend is that of de Valmont in the Foundling of the Forest; a part for which the author has done little, but left much for the genius of the actor. The feeling and gentlemanly deportment of Mr. Wood peculiarly calculated him for the character, and he has performed it frequently with augmented reputation and success.

Mr. Wood's forte, is decidedly genteel comedy, but he succeeds admirably well in tragedy too. His striking excellence is a never failing perfect knowledge of his author, both as to sentiment and language. If we were to designate the parts in which he particularly excels, we should say that his Belcour, Reuben Glenroy, Vapid, Tangent, sir Charles Racket, Michac

Perez, Mercutio and Benedick, in comedy, and in tragedy, his Brutus, Jaffier, Iago, Alonzo in the Revenge, Charles de Moor, and Penruddock were all excellent performances.

We have before hinted that Mr. Wood's reputation was not so much the effect of natural endowments, as the legitimate offspring of long and unwearied application, persevering ambition, and an enthusiastic love of the profession, which he embraced almost from necessity. These qualities have enabled him successfully to combat, and finally to defeat the disadvantages of a delicate frame and an unmelodious voice, and they have gained a reputation scarcely surpassed on this side of the Atlantic. They are enforced indeed by the advantages of a person tall and genteel—a deportment easy and graceful, manners engaging and polite, and a most amiable character in private life. We have therefore always confidence that an actor so endowed, must perpetually improve, since the mind cannot be affected by accident, nor its varieties rendered uninteresting by time.

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LIFE OF JOHN HODGKINSON.

(Concluded.)

IT will be remembered that the conclusion of this article, which ought to have taken place in our number for August, was postponed, in order that the writer might avail himself of some interesting particulars respecting the last few days of Hodgkinson's existence, which had been promised by a person then absent from Philadelphia. The return of that person being already protracted far beyond expectation, and even now remaining very uncertain, it is thought better to proceed with the materials in hand, than to wait for those that were promised, though being more minute and circumstantial, the latter would in all probability be more interesting to our readers, and particularly to those who continue as multitudes do, to cherish a

friendly and fond remembrance of the person to whom they relate.

While Hodgkinson remained at Newyork he lodged at the Tontine Coffeehouse. He had been for some years on a footing of friendly intimacy with the proprietor of it, Mr. John Hyde, and had received from him many proofs of an ardent and disinterested attachment. Indeed it is believed that the popularity of Mr. Hyde, who was much respected by the principal commercial people of that city, had a considerable share in the unanimity with which Hodgkinson was called to the superintendence of the York theatre. It was on the first of September, the two friends parted never again to meet upon earth. For some days before that a very serious alarm of the yellow fever prevailing, had set many of the people of Newyork in motion to the country. As it afterwards turned out, poor Hodgkinson, lived in the very seat of that dreadful disease, and before his leaving the Tontine Coffeehouse to proceed to Washington, felt symptoms of it. Great constitutional vigour, however, and a mind resolutely determined on performing his duties, enabled him to get on, and he reached Philadelphia. There in compliance with the invitation of one of his oldest and most zealous friends, he took up his residence at the house of Mr. Richard Potter the merchant, and remained four days apparently in good health, generally in good spirits, elate with the rich prospect of Fortune, which lay before him, and delighting his friends with his conversation, his anecdote and his song. The very evening preceding his departure he continued to sing, accompanied by Mr. Potter's family with the piano, flute, &c. to a very late hour, while, the windows being open on account of the extreme heat, a crowd, arrested by the charms of his voice, collected below in the street, and testified their admiration by loud and repeated acclamations. It is, however, well recollected that his happiness was occasionally interrupted by starts of uneasiness, and that he frequently let fall expressions of dislike to his intended journey. Several times he wished that he had not undertaken it; and more than once he actually gave up the place he had engaged in the stage. Nay, it was but the evening before he went he said, in a tone and manner which, coupled with the subsequent event,



seemed to be an internal foreboding of his fate, that he would give up his place again and not go. For that he felt an abhorrence to the journey for which he could not account. The sense of duty, however, and a suggestion of the ridiculous situation in which the indulgence of such a weakness would place him, overcame his reluctance, and he set off for Washington, next morning. In the mean time; not only Mr. but Mrs. Hyde died of the yellow fever.

On this part of the history a question, perhaps of some importance to the medical world may arise. In a letter written from Newyork, immediately on his death, the contents of which are now before us, the writer of it says, "he (Hodgkinson) certainly took the fever in Newyork, for he lived in the very seat of the disease, at the Tontine Coffee-house. When he left town there had been no cases reported, but he was very ill with every symptom of the yellow fever before he left it; and, sorrowful to relate, Mr. and Mrs. Hyde, keepers of the Tontine Coffee-house, died within three days." Such was the belief at Newyork; yet he is found in an apparent state of health and cheerfulness travelling to Philadelphia, remaining there for four days in the full enjoyment of social comfort and festivity, and then proceeding to within a short distance of Washington, spending in all eight days from his leaving Newyork, without being arrested by or entertaining a suspicion of his being infected by the fever.

On the other hand it is stated that, having stopped at a place called ——— ferry, yielding to his passionate fondness for rural sports he went out shooting, and on his return to the inn whence he had set out, being excessively fatigued, overheated, and wet with the profuse perspiration, he borrowed from the landlord a change of clothes, and having put them on sat down to table with some sociable companions, with whom he spent the time in jollity and song till night came on. He then called for his shirt, which had been hung out to dry, and left in the open air till the heavy dew of the evening filled it with a dampness of the most fatal kind: he put it on, a fever followed, and being unable to go on with the stage, he stopped on the evening of Sunday the 8th at an inn within twelve miles of Washington. On the

arrival of the stage at Washington without him, Mr. Greene the manager, accompanied by Mr. Harwood, since dead, set off to meet him, and on Monday morning they arrived with him at Stelle's tavern, where he died on the succeeding Thursday, (the 12th September) between twelve and one o'clock in the morning. The circumstances attending his dissolution spread such terror through the hotel where he died, that the customary forms of treatment were denied to the body of that man who had for so many years been the delight of crowded theatres.—His remains were wrapped up in a blanket by negroes, who were induced by a considerable reward to perform the office, and conveyed to an obscure burial ground on the Baltimore road, where they were left entirely unattended till a shell of a coffin was made and a grave hastily dug, into which he was thrown, and thus consigned forever to the earth. Upon this event, the following observation is made by Janson in his *Stranger in America*.

"Some of the most eminent physicians in Newyork and Philadelphia" says he "contend that the yellow fever is not infectious when the patient is removed from the tainted atmosphere where it is generated. A proof to the contrary of this opinion is demonstrated in Mr. Hopkins, (one of the performers) who attended Hodgkinson. There was no fever, no sickness in Washington; yet in a few days Hopkins sickened, was attacked with the same symptoms with equal malignity, and died nearly in as short a time as the friend he had attended."

Upon the professional merit of Hodgkinson there is perhaps less diversity of opinion than upon that of any other of the considerable actors of his time. It is a subject upon which, in many parts of the union and in various companies we have courted dissention and solicited the free opinions of the candid and judicious, and cannot call to mind five instances of his superiority being disputed. Those who spoke most reluctantly in his praise being forced to confess this at least, that as a general actor he was the greatest in America.

Upon authority equal to any on either side of the Atlantic, the position might be extended to Europe. A British personage of high rank, no less distinguished for a refined taste than for his attainments in profound as well as polite literature, paid

the following tribute to Hodgkinson, in a letter written from Newyork to England.

"The American stage has lately been deprived of one of its most eminent supporters and ornaments. Melpomene and Thalia have mingled tears over the tomb of Hodgkinson! He was the votary of both the muses, and equally beloved by the sister deities of the smiles and tears. As a *universal* actor, his versatility of talent was even more extraordinary, than the astonishing powers of the late Mr. John Palmer. I have seen him with great delight in Macbeth and Ruttekin, Jaffier and Sheltý, Rover and John Dory, Osmond, Vapid, sir Wm. Dorillon, lord William, Serasker, Captain Erlach and Gradus. But alas! all this constellation of excellence is now eclipsed: and that sun is set which illumined so many hemispheres! In the course of the last summer he performed at Providence and Newport: and in passing through the city of Newyork for Washington, (where he had a temporary engagement at a lucrative salary for a few nights) he took the epidemic fever and died in the 38th year of his age, leaving two female orphan children, with little other legacy than the kind care of that Providence "who caters for the sparrow." The managers of Newyork, Boston and Charleston have generously determined to give them a free benefit at their theatres. Mrs. Hodgkinson (late miss Brett of the Bath theatre) died two years before him, as did soon afterwards her mother and sister, both of whom were on the stage. The family is thus entirely extinct, except the two orphans."

That this character is warranted by fact, a reference to the list of parts which Hodgkinson performed in his short sojourn at Charleston, and which will be found in our number for August last, will demonstrate. For it may be said, that almost every extreme of character which diversifies the nature of man may be found in that catalogue. The powers to personate such a variety to general satisfaction, never perhaps fell to the share of any one man before him, and that he did perform them all and a multitude of others not less different from them and from each

\* The letter from which the above character of Hodgkinson's acting is extracted, contains a glowing eulogy on Mrs. Jones the celebrated actress and singer, now dead, and is published in the London Monthly Mirror.



other, to the perfect satisfaction of the most enlightened audiences in America, is too well known to be denied even by those, if there be any such, who would sicken at his praise.

Hodgkinson was highly gifted for the profession to which nature and his own choice had directed him. His voice was powerful, melodious, variable and of immense compass. His person and face were both very fine, though by no means faultless. His features taken together composed a physiognomy eminently comely, manly and expressive; yet some of them were, separately defective. His eyes, in all other respects very fine, were injured for grave expression by a disparity in their size, to conceal which he constantly contracted the larger. In comedy this produced a pleasant effect, casting over his whole countenance a kind of drolling expression of cunning, seldom equalled on the stage. Those who remember his side glance towards the audience in the character of Ruttekin when he was pushed in by Robinhood's men, will conceive what we mean. Never from the eye of a Parsons, a Garrick, or a King did there issue a more whimsical expression of mingled fear, wonder and knavery.— Sometimes, in an incautious moment, the gravity of the tragic scene would (to the watchful eye) seem to be nearly discomposed by it. In scenes of love and tenderness, however, his eyes, softened by the finest eye lashes in the world, did their office to a bewitching extent. Those of Barry alone, of all we have ever seen, surpassing them for that expression. Thus, when he played Jaffier, Romeo, Flodoardo and some other parts, the eyes of the actor were no less eloquent than the language of the poet.

His person, though raised much above the common size, possessed advantages of a kind superior to any that can be derived from stature. A neck long, erect, and strongly marked with muscle, and a chest and shoulders, ample and falling in a graceful descent conveyed the idea of strength without clumsiness. His lower limbs however were ill fashioned and clumsy. Hence he appeared to greatest advantage in drapery that concealed his limbs, or in black.

Respecting the degree of histrionic excellence as compared with that of other actors in each of the parts he performed, va-



rious differences of opinion have existed; but his superiority as a universal actor, none have been hardy enough to deny. Those who insist that he was inferior to Mr. Cooper in Macbeth, to Mr. Fennel in Zanga or to Jefferson or Twaits in some comic characters, are yet compelled to own that he could perform a greater number of characters well than any one or two actors known in the memory of man. That there were some of those he played in which his judicious admirers and friends saw him with little pleasure, we have sometimes felt; but it was not because he was not equal to others in them, but because he fell below himself. The characters in which the celebrated Lewis excelled, and in which it may safely be predicted he never will be equalled, and parts of that cast, were less in unison with his powers than any others. The flippant volatile excentricities of a Rapid, a Vapid, and an Ollapod, were not happily associated with a person and voice, the chief characteristics of which were manly dignity, harmony and weight; though descending to a much lower cast, such as Lingo, Ruttekin, Shelly, Brulgrud-dery, and many others, the magnitude of the person rather heightened the comic effect. Yet it was in the parts we allude to, as being most suitable to him, he thought himself unrivalled. A friend's praises of his Charles De Moor, of his Flodoardo, or his Osmond, which in truth were almost beyond all praise, passed for nothing, if his Rapid was forgotten; and, to use a vulgar phrase, *all the fat was in the fire* if his Ollapod was thought unworthy of him. This kind of infatuation is one of the commonest foibles of our nature, and seems peculiarly to inhere in the ambitious sons of the sock and buskin. Garrick alone was exempt from it, or had at least the address to appear so. He had tried Othello, Shylock, Falstaff and many others, but on finding his deficiency in them, renounced forever. Old Mr. Sheridan, who in his best days had a wretched face, voice, and person, and who should never have gone out of sententious declamatory parts in tragedy, when he was manager he took possession of Romeo, and to heighten the absurdity of his performance, took Mercutio's Speech of queen Mab to himself. When he was very old too, we saw him play Douglas for his own benefit. It was upon this

occasion, an old schoolfellow of his, the witty register of the Irish Chancery, exclaimed,

“ Ah Sheridan, Sheridan, quæ te dementia cæpit.

Barry, all formed for the melting cadences of love, affected the tyrant, and loved to roar in *Bajazet*, and bully in *Pierre*.—Quin, when advanced in life, and large enough for Falstaff, played young Beville in a large full bottomed wig, full trimmed velvet clothes, and stiff topt gloves.

Mossop, though cast in the very mould of tragedy, more delighted in *Archer*, in which he was ridiculous, than in *Coriolanus* or *Zanga*, in which he was unrivalled; and to finish the catalogue, Weston, the eldest born of simplicity, in comedy, always considered his exclusion from tragedy as a great loss to the stage, and a proof of want of taste in the public and of judgment in the manager. It is not long too since Cooke made a fool of himself in *Hamlet*; and Kemble, in the absence of Cooke, attempted *Iago*, and incurred severe critical reprehension by the attempt.

Low comedy was certainly the *forte* of Hodgkinson. In *Lingo*, *Shelty*, *Ruttekin*, and a long *et cetera*, he has never been surpassed, and on this side of the Atlantic never equalled. In many parts in tragedy he excelled, though not in the same degree as in low comedy. In *Osmond*, *Charles de Meor*, and *Abacchino*, he has not had a competitor; and his *Jaffier* was excellent. But we think that he lost by a comparison with Cooper in *Macbeth*, *Richard*, *Alexander*, and some other characters.

In some parts of what is called genteel comedy, he was truly excellent, in many respectable, in none censurable. His *Leon*, for instance, must be considered as entitled to the highest praise; his *Don Felix* little less so, and his *Puff* was capital. It would be useless to enumerate all the characters in which he excelled; but his *chef d'œuvre* was certainly captain *Bertram*, in the comedy of *Fraternal Discord*, in which his merit was so great, so perfect, his delineation of every part of it so natural, forcible, and affecting, that we are persuaded it reached that point of excellence above which no actor can possibly rise.—There is a character, we know not whether to rank it under the head of tragic or comic, the *Bastard*, in *King John*, a character

we have often seen attempted in Europe, but never satisfactorily performed.—The stage criticism of England mentions no one instance of success in it; and the greatest panegyrists of Garrick has stated that he was inadequate to the part; yet Hodgkinson's Faulconbridge was little less happy than his captain Bertram. No stage on which the English language has been spoken could ever boast of a much more noble, spirited, bold, and correct piece of acting.

On the other hand we are fain to own that he fell short of his general level in the *Stranger*, in *Octavian*, in *Rolla*, and in *Penruddock*; yet he played them respectably.

Let it be remembered, however, that Hodgkinson is the first and indeed the only one that was ever at once a great actor and a great singer; so that if, of the three departments of tragedy, comedy, and opera, he had been restricted from performing in any two, he would have been greatly eminent in the third.

It has been customary with some people to draw parallels between Hodgkinson and Cooper, sometimes to the advantage of one, sometimes to that of the other. There is a strange averseness in men to let great merit pass without an effort to impair it. Many there are who if no other mode of depreciation be at hand, will ransack the lumber room of their heads to find out some object of comparison to answer their purpose, in which case, by way of displaying their acuteness, they seldom fail to make both sides of the parallel suffer, like the angry Irishman, who seeing two men he disliked playing billiards, devoutly prayed that they might both lose. We own that we never could see any very rational good in instituting comparisons between those two performers. One might praise each with abundant justice, without detracting from the reputation of the other. So far from clashing, they were formed to play together, each in support and illustration of the other's excellence. Their lines of acting were as different as those of Barry and Mossop, or of Cooke and Kemble. Were each forever cut off from the characters in which the other excelled him, there would still remain enough to establish his claims as a great actor beyond the shock of controversy. Their acting may be said rather to exemplify two opposite kinds of histrionic talent than to meet in



rivalship. We speak now of tragic acting merely, in which alone any competition between Hodgkinson and Cooper can be supposed to exist. Hodgkinson, always correct, always perfect in his part, and master of himself and his character, accomplished his aim by one continuous, unabating, steady, equal, but mild light—Cooper, unequal, often incorrect, but at times transcendently great and striking, accomplishes his by occasional flashes of fire which electrify and dazzle, then vanish, and like the transient flash of lightning in the night storm, leave the mind in astonishment and in darkness. Hodgkinson never reached the height that Cooper frequently attains, but that which he attained he held; while Cooper constantly plays in the pinion and falls to the ground. Conversing on this subject with an enlightened critic and scholar, he suggested that *parvis componere magna*, some part of the parallel which doctor Johnson has drawn between Dryden and Pope, might be thus appropriated to Hodgkinson and Cooper. "If the flights of Cooper are higher, Hodgkinson kept longer on the wing. If of Cooper's fire the blaze be brighter, of Hodgkinson's the heat was more regular and constant. Cooper often surpasses expectation, and Hodgkinson never fell below it. Cooper is contemplated with frequent astonishment, Hodgkinson was viewed with continual delight."

With such difficulties as Hodgkinson had in early life to encounter, it is evident that nothing but a mind of a very superior stamp could have enabled him successfully to contend. His mind was indeed vigorous, active, energetic, and capacious. His judgment was sound and accurate, though in men and worldly matters less so, than in knowledge abstracted from the ways of life; his perception was quick, and his memory, almost beyond example, tenacious, insomuch that he was able to prompt, and did constantly prompt every character that played with him.—He had ready at his call all the criticisms and commentaries upon the dramatic poets, and on any dubious point could instantly repeat the opinions of every great annotator on Shakspeare, and even turn at once to the page. As a festive companion, the charms of his conversation are sufficiently known; but it was in serious discussion of private concerns with a friend, and in grave colloquial deliberation he most excelled. The fact



is that his intellectual powers flowed from the joint sources of the head and heart, without which last all the issues of the former are but folly; for his disposition was naturally of the sweetest kind; his temper, untainted with rancour or irascibility; his heart full of zeal in the cause of those he loved, and utterly destitute of mean jealousy or malignity, though not always of resentment. Of his supposed rival, (Cooper,) he always spoke with great respect. This writer remembers that the first impression the latter made upon him was far from favourable, and that when he became acquainted with Hodgkinson, many arguments arose upon the subject, in which Hodgkinson invariably maintained the great professional excellence of Mr. Cooper. There are many in Charleston who can testify the same.

Hodgkinson was manly, benevolent, and generous to a fault; nor was his generosity much encouraged by the gratitude of those who experienced its effects; for he had to this writer's knowledge often to deplore the baseness of those whose necessities his bounty had relieved. Such a man could not fail to have a host of friends, but there were more to praise and flatter him when living than to do justice to his memory when dead. As he had friends, so he had enemies, but they were few considering the excellence of the man. They, however, do their best to supply the deficiency of their numbers, by the pertinacity of their rancour. By none is he more censured for his prodigality than by those who profited by it, and who while they inveigh against his wasteful hospitality are themselves the strongest proofs of his inconsiderateness, by showing on what unworthy objects he could bestow his kindness.

## CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS AND ANECDOTES OF LORD NELSON.

*(Continued from page 283.)*

THE honours conferred on sir H. Nelson when he went to Naples were such as no subject ever before received from a foreign sovereign and nation. On hearing of the victory of the Nile, the queen of Naples wrote with her own hand a letter to the marquis Circello, the Neapolitan ambassador in London, in which she thus expressed herself. "The victory is so complete that I can still scarcely believe it, and if it were not the English nation, which is accustomed to perform prodigies by sea, I could not persuade myself it had happened. It has produced a general enthusiasm. You would have been moved at seeing all my children, boys and girls, hanging round my neck and crying for joy at the happy news. The brave Nelson is wounded; he had the modesty not to mention it. Recommend the hero to his master, he has filled the whole of Italy with admiration of the English nation." And this letter but feebly expressed the transports she disclosed to her court. "She cried, kissed her husband, her children, walked frantic about the room, cried, kissed and embraced every person near her, exclaiming O brave Nelson! O God bless and protect our brave deliverer! O Nelson, Nelson, what do we not owe you! O victor, saviour of Italy! O that my swollen heart could tell personally what we owe him!"

When Nelson in the Vanguard, got in sight of Naples several leagues off, the king went on board, and taking him by the hand, thanked him for his conduct, and the queen, who was indisposed, sent him by the hands of her son, the young prince Leopold, the following letter.

"This letter will be delivered to you by a child, who is very dear to me. I envy him the pleasure which he will have of seeing you, and am much distressed that my indisposition prevents me from expressing all my esteem and gratitude. This child must serve in the navy; I hope he will follow your steps, and that he will be able one day to acquire, at least, a part of your glory. My dear Leopold has declared his regret, and like a child of his tender age with tears, that he had never before known so brave a man. In order to gratify his ardent desire I have sent him to you, and he will declare how anxious I am to be sufficiently recovered to assure you of my

gratitude, deeply engraven on my heart, and which I shall always preserve for a man so illustrious. *Croyez que ma reconnoissance estime pour vous, mon valereux et glorieux general, me accompagnera au tombeau.*"

Notwithstanding all these compliments, the mind of Nelson still revolted at the character and politics of the Neapolitans. To lord St. Vincent he continually complained of that court and that of Vienna.

"What precious moments the courts of Vienna and Naples are losing; three months would liberate Italy; but this court is so enervated that the happy moment will be lost:"—and again:—"I am very unwell, and the miserable conduct of this court is not likely to cool my irritable temper. It is a country of fiddlers and poets, strumpets and scoundrels."—The mob, he said afterwards, were loyal, the nobility jacobins.

When the admiral, after having been at Leghorn, returned to Naples, he was overwhelmed with odes and congratulatory poems on the battle of the Nile. Amongst the rest there was a composition in English prose by an Irish mendicant friar of the name of M'Cormick, which, though possessing little merit, was remarkable for a passage that predicted the taking of Rome by the admiral's ships. This passage struck lord Nelson; but he represented to the friar the impossibility of getting his ships up the Tiber to act against Rome. The mendicant replied "*I nevertheless see that it will come to pass.*" Lord Nelson ordered his secretary to give the poor man some dollars for his labour and good wishes, and *for a time* the friar and his prediction were forgotten, till in 18 months after they were actually fulfilled.

This lord Nelson stated in a letter to the Pope Pius 7th, in the following words—"Holy father, as an individual, who from his public situation had an opportunity of using his utmost exertions to assist in bringing about the happy event of your holiness's return to Rome, I presume to offer my most sincere congratulations on this occasion; and with my most fervent wishes and prayers that your residence may be blessed with health and every comfort this world can afford. Your holiness will, I am sure, forgive my mentioning a circumstance, which although at the time it appeared impossible, in fact did happen. Father M'Cor-



mick, a friar, coming to the house of sir Wm. Hamilton in Sept. 1798, to congratulate me on the battle of the Nile, said, as can be testified—*What you have done is great, but you will do a greater thing, you will take Rome with your ships.*

“Although I do not believe that the father had the gift of foretelling future events, yet his guess was so extraordinary, and has turned out so exactly, that I could not in conscience avoid telling your holiness of it.”

His lordship's next great achievement was that of Copenhagen. Sir Hyde Parker was commander in chief. During a council of war held off Copenhagen, the energy of his lordship's character was remarked. Difficulties were started, relative to each of the powers to be encountered. Lord Nelson kept pacing about the cabin, mortified at every thing that savoured of irresolution. The number of the Swedes was mentioned as formidable; “the more numerous the better,” said he, sharply. The same was said of the Russians; “so much the better,” said he repeatedly, “*so much the better—I wish there were twice as many; the easier the victory, depend upon it.*” He alluded, as he afterwards privately explained, to the total want of tactique among the northern fleets; and to his intention whenever he should bring Swedes or Russians to action, of attacking the head of their line and confusing their movements. His was the spirit that planned the attack, and to him was given the execution of it. “During the interval that preceded the battle,” says Dr. Ferguson, who has described it, “I could only silently admire when I saw *the first man in all the world* spend the hours of the day and night in a boat amidst floating ice, and in the severest weather; and wonder when the light showed me a path marked by buoys, which had been trackless the preceding evening.”

With only twelve sail of the line, detached from the fleet, which lay off the Island of Huen in sight, Nelson proceeded to the attack on the 1st. April in the afternoon. The Danes had nineteen ships besides floating batteries, flanked by two crown batteries on two islands. At eight his lordship dropped anchor, saying emphatically “I will fight them the moment I have a



fair wind."\* On the first attempt to leave their anchorage, the *Agamemnon*, the *Russell* and *Polyphemus*, got on the edge of a shoal, and the *Jamaica* frigate with a convoy of gun boats and small craft, having fallen in with a counter current could not proceed. Any man but Nelson would have been deterred by such misfortunes from going; but he had approached the enemy, and as he said, felt he could not retreat for reinforcements without compromising the glory of his country. He still kept the signal flying to bear down on the enemy; but his agitation was extreme; not the agitation of indecision, but of ardent patriotism panting for glory which had appeared within his reach, and was vanishing from his grasp. Having got within a cable's length of the enemy, he opened upon them his usual tremendous fire, which they returned with great spirit. The absence of the ships which struck on the shoal, rendered his lordship's plan incomplete, else he would have swept all clean. The gallant *Riou* perceiving the blank made in the line by these accidents, proceeded down with a squadron of frigates to supply it by attacking the crown batteries. But his force was unequal to such a heavy work, and his squadron was only saved from destruction by a general signal of recal made about the middle of the action by sir Hyde Parker.

At one o'clock not one of the Danish ships had ceased to fire, and only two of the British bomb vessels could get up to attack the arsenal. The *Isis*, *Polyphemus* and the *Monarch* had suffered

\* He sat down to table with a large party of his comrades, captains Foley, Hardy, Freemantle, *Riou*, Inman, his lordship's second in command, admiral Graves, and a few others, to whom he was partially attached. He was in high spirits and drank to a leading wind, and to the success of the ensuing day. After supper they all went back to their own ships but Hardy and *Riou*, who with his lordship and captain Foley, arranged the order of battle. His great fatigue oppressed him, so that he and his old servant Allen insisted on his lying down, while half a dozen clerks proceeded to transcribe the orders in the foremost cabin. But he could not rest. Every half hour he called out to the clerks to hasten their work, for that the wind was becoming fair, of which he constantly demanded a report. At eight o'clock the instructions were delivered, and at half past nine the signal was made for weighing anchor.

severely, and signals of distress were flying on the Bellona and Russel. When the commander in chief made a signal for the action to cease.

Lord Nelson was at this time walking the deck, sometimes enthusiastically animated, sometimes heroically fierce in his observations. A shot through the main mast knocked some splinters about him, "*it is warm work*" said he to those near him "*and this day may be the last to any of us, at a moment.*" Then stopping at the gangway he said with emotion, "*But mark you I would not be elsewhere for thousands.*" When the signal for ceasing the battle was made, the signal lieutenant reported it to him, his lordship continued to walk and did not appear to take notice of it. The lieutenant meeting him however at the next turn, asked him "*whether he should repeat it.*" "*No,*" answered Nelson "*acknowledge it.*" As the officer returned to the poop to do this, his lordship called after him "*Is No. 16 (the signal for close action) hoisted?*" being answered in the affirmative he said in a determined voice "*then mind you keep it so.*" He then walked the deck much agitated, which was always known by his moving the stump of his right arm. After a turn or two he said to Mr. Ferguson "*do you know what's shown on board the commander in chief? is it No. 39?*" F. asked him what that meant; "*why to leave off action,*" exclaimed he with a shrug; "*now damn me if I do;*" then said he to captain Foley—"*you know Foley I have only one eye—I have a right to be blind sometimes;*" and then, with an archness peculiar to his character, putting the spy-glass to his blind eye, he exclaimed, "*I really do not see the signal.*" No. 16 remained flying: and admiral Graves not seeing it, repeated the signal to cease. Captain Riou with his squadron of frigates hauled off. When the Amazon showed her stern to the Treckroner the brave captain Riou who was sitting on a gun encouraging his men and had been just before wounded in the head was killed by a raking shot. He had just been deploring his being obliged to retreat, and had nobly exclaimed "*what will Nelson think of us?*" His clerk and several marines were killed by his side "*come my boys let us all die together*" said he; the words were scarcely uttered when the fatal shot cut him in two. Thus died one of the noblest of mankind, and one whose worth

resembled the heroes of romance. Lord Nelson writing to lord St. Vincent gives this laconic and generous hint to government about Riou, "*I do not know his circumstances; but I recollect when he was at death's door in the Guardian, he recommended a mother and sisters. I need say no more.*" The mother had died in the interim, between the 2d April and the melancholy intelligence of his death reaching England.

The action still continued with unabated vigour till two P. M. when the greater part of the Danish line ceased to fire; some of their ships were adrift, and the carnage on board their fleet, which was constantly reinforced from the shore, was terrible.—The Dannebourgh took fire and drifted, spreading terror through its own line, and ceased to fire. The action was over along the whole of the line astern of Nelson, but those ahead and the crown batteries still kept up a fire, and the very boats sent to save the crew of the Dannebourgh who were leaping overboard and out of the port-holes were shot at. Seeing this, lord Nelson lost his temper and observed that he "must either send on shore and stop this irregular proceeding, or send in fire ships and burn them." He accordingly retired into the stern gallery and wrote with instant despatch that well known letter addressed to the crown prince, with the address "*To the brothers of Englishmen, the brave Danes;*" and to show that no hurry had ensued on the occasion, he sent for a candle to the cockpit, and affixed a larger seal than usual. "Vice Admiral Lord Nelson has been commanded to spare Denmark, when she no longer resists. The line of defence which covered her shores has struck to the British flag. Let the firing cease then, that he may take possession of his prizes, or he will blow them into the air along with their crews, who have so nobly defended them. The brave Danes are the brothers and should never be the enemies of the English." A negociation ensued which ended in the delivering up of the ships, and an armistice. In this negociation lord Nelson showed himself as perfect a politician as he had in the battle a commander.

This was the second time his lordship had essentially served his country by disobeying the orders of his superior officer. In 1799, when he was protecting Naples, lord Keith sent him two positive orders to sail to the protection of Minorca, to obey which



Nelson positively refused upon grounds that showed how little he regarded himself compared with his country's welfare. In a letter to the Duke of Clarence, lord N. says "You will have heard sir that I have disobeyed lord Keith's orders, but by not doing it I have been with God's blessing, the principal means of placing a good man and faithful ally of your royal father, on his throne, and securing peace to these two kingdoms. I am well aware of the consequences of disobeying my orders; but as I have often risked my life for the good cause, so I with cheerfulness did my commission: for although a military tribunal may think me guilty, the world will approve of my conduct. I regard not my own safety when the honour of my gracious king is at stake. The Almighty has in this war blessed my endeavours beyond my most sanguine expectations, and never more than in the entire expulsion of the French thieves from the kingdom of Naples."

The admiralty at once approved of his conduct, and censured his disobedience. That this sensibly affected him appears from his own words, in a letter to his friend Davidson. "If the war goes on, I shall be knocked off with a ball or killed with chagrin. My conduct is measured by the admiralty by the narrow rule of law, when, I think, it should have been done by that of common sense. *I restored a faithful ally by breach of orders; lord Keith lost a fleet by obedience; yet as one is censured the other must be approved.*"

During the negotiation at Copenhagen, he felt his dangerous situation, and reflecting upon the devastation committed by his fleet in direct disobedience of his commander's orders, he was heard to exclaim, "*Well, I have fought contrary to orders, and I shall perhaps be hanged: never mind, let them!*"

Sir Hyde Parker, however, behaved nobly. He closed his official letter to the admiralty thus—"His lordship (Nelson) has stated so fully the whole of his proceedings on that day, as only to leave me the opportunity to declare my entire acquiescence, and testimony of the bravery and intrepidity with which the action was supported throughout the line. Were it possible for me to add any thing to the well earned renown of lord Nelson, it would be by asserting that his exertions, great as they have hitherto



been, never were carried to a higher pitch of zeal for his country's service."

Lord Nelson was ever a decided enemy to severe discipline, and never would consent to inflict corporal punishment, where it was in any way possible to avoid it. When driven to it, he was more miserable and unhappy, during the execution of the sentence, than the culprit himself. He understood mankind, and could lead them where he pleased. No man was ever more faithfully obeyed, yet he knew not the use of terror. His hold was on the affections and reason of man, aided by example; and such a hold, that he actually inspired cowardice itself with courage and enthusiasm. In all his life he never was known to do an unfriendly act to any officer about him. If they behaved ill, and he was urged to prosecute them, he used to answer—"There is no occasion to ruin the poor devil; he is sufficiently his own enemy to ruin himself." Expulsion from the ship was the severest punishment he inflicted. He was literally what all the sailors used, in their familiar but expressive language to say of him, "*Our NEL is as brave as a lion and as gentle as a lamb.*"

His pursuit, with only ten sail of the line, of the French fleet, consisting of twenty-four, down the Mediterranean, thence to the West Indies, and thence back again, will never be forgotten. His health was impaired, his spirits exhausted, he was worn to a shadow, and his mind harassed with anxiety; yet his firmness never for a moment forsook him. In a letter to lord Seaforth, speaking of the superiority of the enemy's force in numbers, he says, "but theirs must be unwieldy; mine is compact, and although a very pretty fiddle, I don't believe that either Gravina or Villeneuve know how to play upon it." He left the Straits on the 12th of May; the 15th he made Madeira. The 4th of June he reached Barbadoes; on the 5th left it, and on the 6th reached Tobago. Misled by the purposed misinformation of an American brig, he visited the gulf of Paria, where the French had *not* been, by which he missed them at Martinique. On the 9th he reached Grenada; and in a word, he had in eight days secured the West-Indies from the plunder and havoc of the French and Spanish fleets, which, superior as they were, fled at the very terror of his name. \* In that time too he had received on board and disembarked again,

two thousand troops; and on the 17th July he again came in sight of Cape St. Vincents, being absent only 67 days. On the 20th July, says he, in his own diary, "*I went on shore for the first time since June 16th, 1803; and from having my foot out of the Victory, two years wanting two days.*"

It was on the 21st of the following October (1805) that his last achievement and his death took place at Trafalgar. He had a presentiment that it would end his career, and he was prepared and content to die, that his country might be protected from the inveterate enemies of the civilized world. On the break of day he committed himself and his cause to God, in a fervent and affecting prayer, and then put on the coat he had so often worn on the day of victory, and which he kept with veneration. The various insignia he had received from different nations were worked upon it, and the star of the order of the Bath, which he most valued, was nearest his heart. "*In honour,*" said he, "*I gained them, and in honour I will die with them.*"

The combined fleet consisted of thirty-three powerful ships; the British of twenty-five. Captain Blackwood, of the Euryalus frigate, who was kept on board the Victory by his lordship to the last moment, has given a memoir of their conversation, from which the following extracts are made:

"He frequently asked me *what I should consider as a victory?* the certainty of which he never for an instant doubted; and my answer was, that considering the handsome way that battle was offered by the enemy, their apparent determination for a fair trial of strength, and the proximity of the land, I thought that if fourteen were captured, it would be a glorious result; to which he replied, '*Blackwood, I shall not be satisfied with any thing short of twenty.*' A telegraphic signal had been made by him to denote that *he intended* to break through the enemy's line, to prevent their getting into Cadiz. I was walking with him on the poop, (continues captain Blackwood) when he said, '*I'll now amuse the fleet with a signal;*' and he asked me if I did not think there was one yet wanting? I answered, that I thought the whole of the fleet seemed very clearly to understand what they were about, and to vie with each other who should get nearest to the Victory and Royal Sovereign. These words were

scarcely uttered when his well known signal was made, 'ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY.' The shout with which it was received throughout the fleet was truly sublime. 'Now,' said lord Nelson, '*I can do no more: we must trust to the great Disposer of all events, and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty.*'

"From the number of their huge three deckers, and the sun shining on their sails, the enemy's fleet made a most formidable appearance. This, so far from appalling the seamen through the British fleet, only induced them to observe, '*What a fine show these ships will make at Spithead!*'"

"The enemy moved on gallantly—'*They put a good face on it,*' said Nelson, '*but I'll give them such a dressing as they never had before.*'

"At ten o'clock," says captain Blackwood, "lord Nelson's anxiety to close with the enemy, became very apparent. I ventured to represent to him the value of such a life as his, and particularly in the present battle, and I proposed hoisting his flag on board the Euryalus, whence he would better see what was going on, as well as what to order in case of necessity: but he would not hear of it, and gave as his reason, the force of example, and probably he was right. My next object was to induce him to let the Temeraire, Neptune and Leviathan, lead into action before the Victory, which was then headmost. After much conversation, in which I ventured to give it as the opinion of captain Hardy and myself, how advantageous it would be to the fleet for his lordship to keep as long as possible out of the battle, he at length consented to allow the Temeraire, which was then abreast of the Victory, to go ahead, and hailed captain Harvey to say such were his intentions, if the Temeraire could pass the Victory. Captain Harvey, being rather out of hail, his lieutenant sent me to communicate his wishes, which I did; but when I returned I found him doing all he could to increase sail, so that the Temeraire could not pass the Victory: consequently, captain Harvey was obliged to take his station astern, and let the admiral be foremost.

Nelson ordered the Victory to be steered straight up to the Santissima Trinidad of 140 guns, which opened a tremendous fire upon him; his lordship noticed with pleasure the coolness preserved by his crew, and declared that in all his battles he had never seen any thing to surpass it. The Victory had 20 killed and 30 wounded before she returned a shot. Her mizen-topmast and all her studden-sails and booms on both sides were shot away, when at four minutes past twelve she opened her larboard guns on the enemy. Captain Hardy observed to the admiral that it would be impossible to break the enemy's line without running on board one of their ships, and begged to know which; *take your choice* Hardy, he replied, *it does not signify which.* The Victory fell on board the Redoubtable and the battle raged with unexampled fury.

In the first heat of the action Mr. Scott, lord Nelson's secretary, was killed by a cannon ball whilst in conversation with captain Hardy, and near to lord Nelson. As the mangled body was removing the admiral saw it—*Is that poor Scott,* said he, *who is gone?* In a few minutes a shot struck the fore brace bits on the quarter deck, and passing between lord Nelson and captain Hardy, drove some splinters from the bits about them, and bruised captain Hardy's foot. They mutually looked at each other, when Nelson, whom no danger could affect, smiled and said, *this is too warm work, Hardy, to last.* The Redoubtable had for some time commenced a heavy fire of musquetry from her tops, which like those of the other enemy's ships were filled with riflemen. At a quarter past one and about fifteen minutes before the Redoubtable struck, the admiral was by a musket bullet wounded on the left shoulder, which entering the epaulet, passed through the spine and lodged in the muscles of the back. He instantly fell with his face on the deck, in the very spot that was covered with the blood of his secretary, Mr. Scott. Captain Hardy ran up while Secker, a sergeant of marines, and two seamen raised his lordship from the deck. Hardy, said his lordship, *I believe they have done it at last, my back bone is shot through!*

The admiral was carried to the cockpit together with several wounded officers and about 40 seamen. As his lordship



was passing down the ladder he observed that the tiller ropes had been carried away, and ordered a midshipman to tell captain Hardy to have new ones rove directly. He then covered his face and stars with his handkerchief, that he might be the less observed by the men.

The surgeon, Mr. Beatty, ordered his lordship's clothes to be taken off, that the direction of the ball might be ascertained.— *You can be of no use to me Beatty, said the hero, go and attend those whose lives can be preserved.* When the surgeon had done his melancholy task, and had again been urged by the admiral to go and attend to his duty, he reluctantly obeyed, but continued to return at intervals. As the blood flowed internally from the wound, the lower cavity of the body gradually filled: lord Nelson therefore constantly desired Mr. Burke, the person who supported his head, to raise him, and complaining of excessive thirst, was supplied by Mr. Scott with lemonade. In this state of suffering, with nothing but havoc and death and misery around him, the spirit of Nelson remained unsubdued, and his mind still intent upon the great object, his country's service. He anxiously inquired for captain Hardy, to know whether the destruction of the enemy was certain. It was an hour before Hardy could leave the deck, and lord Nelson became apprehensive that he was dead. The crew of the Victory were now heard to cheer: demanding the cause, he was told that one of their opponents had struck. A gleam of devout joy lighted up the countenance of Nelson: and as the crew repeated their cheers, and marked the progress of their victory, his delight visibly increased. *"Will no one bring Hardy to me?"* he exclaimed; *"He must be killed; I am certain he is dead."* The captain's aid then came, and in a low voice told the surgeon the circumstances respecting the fleet which detained captain Hardy, but that he would take the first moment that offered to leave the deck. The excessive heat of the cockpit, from the numbers of the dead and wounded, increased the faintness of the dying hero, and his sight became dim. *"Who brought the message?"* said he feebly: Bulkely, my lord, replied Mr. Burke. *"It is his voice: remember me, Bulkely, to your father,"* said Nelson. Captain Hardy soon afterwards came down from the deck, and endeavoured to conceal the feelings with which he had been struggling. *"How*

*goes the day with us, Hardy?"* 'Ten ships, my lord, have struck.' 'But none of ours, I hope.' 'There's no fear, my dear lord, of that: five of their van have tacked, and show an intention of bearing down upon us; but I have called some of our fresh ships round the Victory, and have no doubt of your complete success.' Unable any longer to suppress the feelings of his brave heart, Hardy turned away to conceal the bitterness of his sorrow.

The firing continued, and the cheers of the men were occasionally heard amidst its repeated peals. With a wish to support the hero's spirits, Mr. Burke said, "I still hope, my lord, you will carry this glorious news home." *"Don't talk nonsense, Burke,"* the admiral replied. *"One would, indeed, like to live a little longer; but I know it to be impossible; God's will be done. I have performed my duty, and him I thank for it."*

A wounded seaman, who was lying near him, waiting for amputation, was in the bustle hurt by some person passing by. Nelson, weak though he was, indignantly turned his head, and reprimanded the man severely for not having more humanity.

The surgeon again returned to him. *"I find something rising in my heart,"* said he, *"which tells me I shall soon be gone. God be praised that I have done my duty. My pain is so severe that I devoutly wish to be released."*

When the result of the day was accomplished, captain Hardy returned to his dying chief, and reported the number that had struck. *"God be praised!"* exclaimed Nelson. *"Hardy, bring the fleet to an anchor."* The delicacy of captain Hardy's situation, from there being no captain of the fleet, was embarrassing; and with as much feeling as the subject would admit of, he hinted at the command devolving upon admiral Collingwood.—Nelson, feeling the vast importance of the fleet being brought to anchor, and the ruling passion of his soul predominating even in death, replied, somewhat indignantly, *"Not whilst I live, I hope, Hardy."* And vainly endeavouring at the moment to raise himself on the pallet, he said authoritatively, *"Do you bring the fleet to anchor!"* Captain Hardy was returning to the deck to obey, when the admiral called him back, and begged him to come near. Lord Nelson then delivered his last injunctions, and de-

sired that his body might be carried home to be buried, unless his sovereign should otherwise order it, by the bones of his father and mother. He then took captain Hardy by the hand, and observing that he should not see him again alive, the dying hero desired his brave associate to kiss him, that he might seal their long friendship with that affection which pledged sincerity in death. Hardy stood over the revered body in speechless agony, then knelt down and kissed the admiral's forehead. "*Who is that?*" said the dying hero. "It is Hardy, my lord." "*God bless you, Hardy,*" replied he feebly. "*I wish I had not left the deck—I shall soon be gone.*" His voice then gradually became inarticulate, with an evident increase of pain. After a feeble struggle, he spoke these last words so distinctly as to be heard—"I have done my duty; I praise God for it"—upon saying which he expired.

The sensation which the death of this great and wonderful man produced upon all classes of people in the British dominions, were of a kind before unknown and unimagined. From the sovereign to the lowest peasant, every being felt and owned that he had experienced a loss. The best families went into mourning for him. Every mouth was full of his achievements. Every honour was done to his memory; and men of all parties made the walls of parliament echo the praises of Nelson. The press of course was fruitful in productions upon the event, and forgetting their venality, all its creatures for once united in a just tribute to the excellence of the greatest of men. Poets of state too,\* invoked their muses with more than their usual fire, to sing the hero's praise, and mourn his death. Most of these productions are collected in one or other of the volumes of memoirs and biographical histories which have been published on this illustrious subject. One, however, which appearing in the form of a paragraph in a country newspaper in England, was little noticed, seemed to us so elegant and so sublime, that we thought it would be unpardonable not to treasure it up; and we now feel happy that we have it in our power to annex it to these extracts.

\* Mr. Canning.

## LORD NELSON'S DEATH AND TRIUMPH.

*Taken from the Isis of Sheffield.*

"Intelligence of a most glorious event, accompanied with tidings of an awful calamity, (like the angels of mercy and affliction travelling together) has arrived on our shores, and awakened the public mind from the agony of despondence, to a tumult of mingled emotions, sorrow and joy, mourning and triumph. On the 21st of October, while the cowardly and incapable MACK was surrendering himself alive into the hands of Bonaparte, the noble and lamented lord Nelson, once more, and for the last time, fought and conquered the united foes of his country; but he fell in the meridian of victory, and in one moment became immortal in both worlds. His career of services had been long, but it was only in the last war that he burst upon the eye of the public as a luminary of the first magnitude. At the battle of Aboukir, he rose like the sun in the east, and like the sun too, after a summer's day of glory, he set in the west, at the battle of Trafalgar, leaving the ocean in a blaze as he went down, and in darkness when he descended.

"In ages to come, when the stranger who visits our island shall inquire for the monument of Nelson, the answer will be, 'BEHOLD HIS COUNTRY WHICH HE HAS SAVED!'"

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LIFE OF MASSINGER.

*(Concluded.)*

MASSINGER appears for the first time in the office book of the master of the Revels, December 3d, 1623, on which day his play of the Bondman was brought forward.

In 1624, he published the Bondman, and dedicated it to Philip, earl of Montgomery, second son of Henry, earl of Pembroke, who gave a liberal suffrage in its favour. This dedication, which is sensible, modest, and affecting, serves to prove



that whatever might be the unfortunate circumstance which deprived the author of the patronage and protection of the elder branch of the Herberts, he did not imagine it to be of a disgraceful nature, or he would not in the face of the public have appealed to his connexions with the family.

This dedication, which was kindly received, led the way to a closer connexion and a certain degree of familiarity, for which, perhaps, the approbation so openly expressed of the Bondman, might be designed by Montgomery as an overture. At a subsequent period Massinger styles the earl his "most singular good lord and patron," and speaks of the greatness of his obligations.

———— Mine being more  
Than they could owe, who since, or heretofore  
Have labour'd with exalted lines to raise  
Brave piles, or rather pyramids of praise,  
To Pembroke and his family.

What pecuniary advantages he derived from the present address, cannot be known; whatever they were, they did not preclude the necessity of writing for the stage, which he continued to do with great industry, seldom producing less than two new pieces annually. In 1629 he gave to the press the *Renegado* and the *Roman Actor*, both of which had now been several years before the public. The first of these he inscribed to lord Berkeley, in a short address composed with taste and elegance. He speaks with some complacency of the merits of the piece, but trusts that he shall live to tender his humble thankfulness in some higher strain: this confidence in his abilities, the pleasing concomitant of true genius, Massinger often felt and expressed. The latter play, he presented to sir Philip Kuyvet, and sir Thomas Jeay, with a desire, as he says, that the world might take notice of his being indebted to their support for the power to compose the piece. He expatiates on their kindness in warm and energetic language, and accounts for addressing "the most perfect birth of his Minerva" to them, from their superior demands on his gratitude.

We may be pretty confident that Massinger seldom, if ever, received for his most strenuous and fortunate exertions, more

than fifty pounds a year;\* this indeed, if regularly enjoyed, would be sufficient, with decent economy, to have preserved him from want. But nothing is better known than the precarious nature of dramatic writing.

In 1630, he printed the *Picture*. This play was warmly supported by the "Noble Society of the Inner Temple." These gentlemen were so sensible of the extraordinary merits of this admirable performance, that they gave the author leave to particularise their names at the end of the dedication, an honour which he declined, because, as he modestly observes, and evidently with an allusion to some of his cotemporaries, he "had rather enjoy the real proofs of their friendship, than mountebank-like, boast their names in a catalogue."

In 1631 he brought forth three pieces in as many months.—Two of those are lost; the third is the *Emperor of the East*, which was inscribed to lord Woburn, who was so much pleased with the perusal of the author's printed works, that he commissioned his nephew, sir Aston Cockayne, to express his opinion of them, and to present the writer "with a token of his love and intended favour." It is to the praise of sir Aston that he not only maintained his esteem and admiration of Massinger during the poet's life, but preserved an affectionate regard for his memory, of which his writings furnish many proofs. He was a catholic, and suffered much for his religion.

The *Fatal Dowry* was printed in 1632, and in the following year he brought forward "*The City Madam*." As this play was disposed of to the performers, it remained in manuscript till the distress brought upon the stage by the persecution of the puritans, induced them to commit it to the press. The person to whom we are indebted for its appearance was Andrew Penny-cuicke, an actor of some note. In the dedication to the countess of Oxford, he observes, with a spirited reference to the restrictions then laid on the drama—"In that age, when *wit or learning were not conquered by injury and violence*, this poem was

\* Reynolds makes by his mortal pieces twenty times as much.

the object of love and commendations." Mr. Malone conjectures that the play alluded to in the affecting letter to Mr. Hinchlon, already mentioned, was the Fatal Dowry. I have sometimes, says Mr. Gifford, felt a pang at imagining that the play on which they (viz. Massinger, Daborne and Field,) were then engaged, and for which they solicit a trifling advance in such moving terms, was the Fatal Dowry, one of the noblest compositions that ever graced the English stage! Even though it should not be so, it is yet impossible to be unaffected when we consider that those who actually did produce it, were in danger of perishing in gaol, for want of a loan of five pounds!

About the same time he printed the *Maid of Honour*, with a dedication to sir Francis Foljambe, and sir Thomas Bland, which cannot be read without sorrow. He observes that these gentlemen had continued, for many years, the patron of him and his despised studies, and he calls upop the world to take notice, as from himself, that he "*had not to that time subsisted,*" but that he was supported by their frequent courtesies and favours.

It is not improbable, however, that he was now labouring under the pressure of more than usual want, as the failure of two of his plays had damped his spirits, and materially checked the prosecution of his dramatic studies. The names of the pieces are not known; but he records the fact in the prologue to the *Guardian*. To this, probably, we owe the publication of *A new way to pay old Debts*, which was now first published with a sensible and manly address to the earl of Cærnarvon, who had married lady Sophia Herbert, the sister of his patron, Philip earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. "I was born," he says "a devoted servant to the thrice noble family of your incomparable lady, and am most ambitious, but with a becoming distance, to be known to your lordship."

All Massinger's patrons were persons of worth and eminence. Philip had not at this time tarnished the name of Pembroke by ingratitude, and the earl of Cærnarvon was a man of unimpeachable honour and integrity. He followed the declining fortunes of his royal master, and fell at Newbury, where he commanded the cavalry, after defeating that part of the parliamentary army to which he was opposed. In his last moment (says Fuller) as

he lay on the field, a nobleman of the royal party desired to know if he had any request to make to the king, to whom he was deservedly dear, comforting him with the assurance that it would be readily granted. His reply was such as became a brave and conscientious soldier: "I will not die with a suit in my mouth, but to the king of kings!"

In 1634, Massinger produced three plays, only one of which, and the delightful comedy of *A very Woman*, is come down to us. In 1636, he wrote *The Bashful Lover*, and printed *The Great Duke of Florence*, with a dedication to sir Robert Wiseman, of Thorrell's Hall, in Essex. In this he acknowledges "that, for many years, he had but faintly subsisted, if he had not often tasted his bounty." In this precarious state of dependence, passed the life of a man, who is charged with no want of industry, suspected of no extravagance, and whose works were, at the very period, the boast and delight of the stage!

*The Bashful Lover* is the latest play of Massinger's writing which we possess, but there were three others posterior to it, of which the last, the Anchoress of Pausilippo, was acted January 26, 1640, about six weeks before his death. Previous to this he sent to the press one of his early plays, *The Unnatural Combat*, which he inscribed to Autholy Sentleger, (whose father, sir Wareham, had been his particular admirer,) being, as he says, ambitious to publish his many favours to the world. It is pleasant to find the author, at the close of his blameless life, avowing, as he here does, with an amiable modesty, that the noble and eminent persons to whom his former works were dedicated, did not think themselves disparaged, by being "celebrated as the patrons of his humble studies, in the first file of which," he continues, "*I am confident you shall have no cause to blush to find your name written.*"

Massinger died on the 17th March, 1640. He went to bed in good health, says Langbaine, and was found dead in the morning in his own house, on the bank side. He was buried in the church yard of St. Saviours, and the comedians paid the last sad duty to his name, by attending him to the grave.

It does not appear, from the strictest search, that a stone or inscription of any kind, marked the place where his dust was de-



posited: even the memorial of his mortality is given with a pathetic brevity, which accords but too well with the obscure and humble passages of his life: "March 20th, 1539—40, buried Philip Massinger, A STRANGER!" No flowers were flung into his grave, no elegies soothed his hovering spirit; and of all the admirers of his talents and his worth, none but sir Aston Cockayne dedicated a line to his memory. It would be an abuse of language to honour any composition of sir Aston with the name of poetry, but the steadiness of his regard for Massinger may be justly praised.

Though we are ignorant of every circumstance respecting Massinger, but that he lived and died, we may form some idea of his personal character from the hints scattered through his works. In what light he was regarded, may be collected from the recommendatory poems prefixed to his several plays, in which the language of his panegyrists, though warm, expresses an attachment apparently derived, not so much from his talents as his virtues. He is, as Davis has observed, their *beloved, much esteemed, dear, worthy, deserving, honoured, long known, and long-loved friend*, &c. &c. All the writers of his life unite in representing him as a man of singular modesty, gentleness, candour, and affability; nor does it appear that he ever made or found an enemy. With all this, however, he appears to have maintained a constant struggle with adversity; since not only the stage, from which his natural reserve prevented him from deriving the usual advantages, but even the bounty of his particular friends, on which he chiefly relied, left him in a state of absolute dependance. Johnson, Fletcher, Shirley, and others, not superior to him in abilities, had their periods of good fortune, their bright as well as their stormy hours; but Massinger seems to have enjoyed no gleam of sunshine. His life was all one wintry day, and "shadows, clouds, and darkness rested upon it." That he did not conceal his misery his editors appear inclined to reckon among his faults; he bore it, however, without impatience, and we only hear of it when it is relieved. Poverty made him no flatterer, and what is still more rare, no maligner of the great; nor is one symptom of envy manifested in any part of his compositions.

But the great, the glorious distinction of Massinger, is the uniform respect with which he treats religion and its ministers, in an age when it was found necessary to add regulation to regulation, to stop the growth of impiety on the stage. No priests are introduced by him "to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh at their licentious follies; the sacred name is not lightly invoked, nor daringly sported with; nor is scripture prophaned by buffoon allusions lavishly put into the mouths of fools and women."

With Massinger terminated the triumph of dramatic poetry. Indeed the stage itself survived him but a short time. The nation was convulsed to its centre by contending factions, and a set of austere and gloomy fanatics, enemies to every elegant amusement, and every social relaxation, rose upon the ruins of the state. Exasperated by the ridicule with which they had long been covered by the stage, they persecuted the actors with unrelenting severity, and consigned them, together with the writers, to hopeless obscurity and wretchedness. Taylor died in the extreme of poverty; Shirley opened a little school, and Lowin, the boast of the stage, kept an alehouse at Brentford.

Balneolum Gabeis, furnos conducere Romæ  
Tentarunt.

Others, and those the far greater number, joined the royal standard, and exerted themselves with more gallantry than good fortune in the service of their old and indulgent master.

## OLD MR. SHERIDAN.

That Mr. Sheridan had the hereditary credit of being the son of Swift's friend, who growing out of a schoolmaster into a dean became at last dignified when he ceased to be serviceable to society; that bred at Westminster and Dublin for the church, he chose what he thought a better market for his attainments, and went upon the stage: that he managed in Dublin, and afterwards was at Drury Lane, and Covent Garden, are facts every body have in their possession.

The incident which drove him from Dublin, on a scrupulosity for punctilio, in not repeating a few lines from MAHOMET, is attributed by most people to that pertinacity which partakes of obstinacy rather than proper firmness. In a theatre, as in other situations of human intercourse incessant allowance must be made for popular insanity. Sheridan's example will form no precedent for those who follow him. What the people like, they may perhaps without offence, like to have again. Nor will, nor should any casual construction of dramatic despotism, overrule a popular wish, to mount any passage that can carry double, and thus mark it; as morally improving, poetically potent or politically true.—The decorum of the French theatre is not the less proverbial, because Voltaire's Zaire was encored from the first scene to the last.

Sheridan thinking otherwise, certainly did right in abiding by what he thought; but he could abide no longer in Ireland. He went to London, and played both with Rich and Garrick. His highest salary was 400*l.* a year.

To find a city brick and to leave it marble was an imperial work and worthy of imperial praise. Sheridan's merit is similar, in the proportion that the Dublin theatre bore to all the structures of Rome.

He found the theatre in beggary, because fitted only for the resort of those who are worse than beggars, the dissolute and the ignorant. He reformed it altogether. The feats of a bear-garden and a puppet-show gave way at once to proper objects, intellectual and moral. Garrick, Woffington and Barry, were with him in his second season on his stage together. And thus,

by fair provocations of the popular pleasure, by conspicuous subservience to popular use, he was enabled to aggrandise the establishment to the mutual profits of himself and the public.

The receipts of the Dublin theatre, before his time were from 2000*l.* to 3000*l.* and 4000*l.* a year. And he further told the writer of this account, that in the second season above mentioned, his annual charges, on different engagements, exceeded 11,000*l.* With the public, such as we find it, there is no surer hope than the operation of public spirit.

His conduct in the management, is remembered by something even better than magnificence. They who are in the habit of hearing anecdotes of this sort, always mentioned Mr. Sheridan as punctilious to his promise, in the true and liberal performance.

It is for this, and other personal qualities of good account, that his memorial is thought worth preserving.

In the great relative duties of a husband and a father, he had no blame, and much praise. The preference of his family to himself, was always exemplary. It is positively true, that at one period, led merely by a vague idea, that foreign air and foreign language might be serviceable to his family, he quitted the stage, and every view of gain in Great Britain, and went with his wife and four children to France. They lived above eighteen months at Blois.

If labour can be estimated by its effects, he must have had a skill in forming the minds of children, as well as the power of making large sacrifices to their support, for how else, *sine re, et sine spe*, could he have made one son secretary at war, and the other, such a parliamentary leader, as to be a candidate for any office that he pleases, in the land!

To increase this wonder and to show how some men can make much out of little, Sheridan stinted none of the exterior claims of a gentleman: His dress, his habitation, his hospitality when he exercised it were rather above than below expectation, at par. He for many years thought riding was among the necessities of life; and if Swift could be seen "in dirty shoes" at lord Oxford's table, it was what Sheridan never was at dinner time.



The resources from which he did all this, for he was too well principled to run in debt, was management, indeed—but something more. He was very active, patient, undisdaining of small expedients, and persevering in the use of them. Not Johnson, Watts, nor Milton could be more magnificently just on the condescensions of literature. When his profession no longer was productive, he was reading or he wrote. With a bravery of temper that much became him, and with a fair parade, he contrived to aggrandize little things, and make of much moment what in itself was not momentous. Of the seven and forty years he had to live on his wits, and his wits were not the most thriving in the world, it is well known how short a time he was on the stage. His pension he had about twenty years—the nominal value of it was but 200*l* a year, after the deductions of land tax and the six-penny duty, but 160*l* remained! The rest of his supply came from the miscellaneous aids just mentioned, and surely therefore to be mentioned with incessant praise.

Sheridan was not a little sought after as a companion, though he was far from excellently companionable; though he was sometimes talkative till he was almost troublesome, and tenacious till he was rude: though he was more remarkable perhaps for his ignorance than showing knowledge. His forte was anecdote; his foible, its undue repetition. His professional merits, if no more is said about them than they deserved, will be in a small compass. Such is the magic of fine writing, it can make us think almost as it pleases. Churchill had given Sheridan some current praise, and so people were contented to take him. But that was soon over: for what has neither lustre nor weight, cannot long possibly pass.

As an actor, he might have occasional energy, and more frequently an air of science about him. But through the entire conduct of a drama, that science and that energy were neither characteristic nor consequential. He was not very fertile in original resources, nor happy in applying the resources of other people. He was not to be huddled in the common mob, who may be actors on mechanism and tradition: but as ambitious of first rate

rank, he was to be dismissed as awkward, indiscriminating, cold, and unprevailing,

Sapientia, prima est,  
Stultitia carnisse,

Discretion and decorum in general, he wanted not; though in a particular instance or two, he was absurd beyond all example. It was in *Romeo and Juliet*: his part was Romeo; and not having quite so good an opinion of the other actors as himself, he despoiled *Mercutio* of his gay speech upon the effects of the imagination in dreams, and spoke it as Romeo, then lovesick and all forlorn, "proverbed" with a grandsire phrase, and "not able to pitch a bound above dull woe!"

Sheridan, among other praiseworthy parts of his temper, had formed himself into a perfect indifference to time and chance. Whatever cross casually came, found him contented and open to cheering consideration; though sometimes, Rouchefoucault would say, these perhaps he owed to vanity, no less than to resignation. As when his benefit failed to such a degree, that there was but twenty pounds in the house, he still vaunted his *attractions* and said, with enviable fatuity, "in regard to that point, the account was astonishing! there is one universal snow! and on the face of God's earth there was not another man whose benefit would have brought as many shillings."

The small irreverence, just mentioned, was the only habitual error in his talk.

As a reader also, Sheridan was elaborate; and much of his labour was in vain. He had no prismatic power, to break up the constituted splendours before him, he had no *focus*-like point to draw them together again. He was luminous in no sense; neither to dazzle nor inflame. He had little analysis, or combination; his energy was noisy, his art super-serviceable; he was merely sonorous, varying, though coarsely in his tones; and by prescription, imposing

Yet he pointed right, though he could not hit the mark; he showed a proper object, when he showed to what *uses* reading might be applied. Lord Loughborough and bishop Woodward were among his pupils. And the two clergymen who are supposed

to be the best readers in England, have been heard to say of Sheridan's book on the liturgy, "that erroneous as the book is they should never have began the study without it!"

Lord Loughborough, then Mr. Wedderburne, got, through lord Bute, the pension for Sheridan. This was one chief recompence he had for his labours, it was a recompence far better that he survived to see the *triumphs of his son!*

As a writer, Sheridan had that praise, which is now for him of best account, the *praise of tendency*. That he might *do good* was his expectation and his wish. To nobody except his publisher, could his works do any harm.

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THE DRAMA.

THE most interesting event that has yet occurred in the history of the American stage, has taken place since the publication of the last number of the Mirror: It will at once be understood that we allude to the arrival on these shores of the celebrated actor, *George Frederick Cooke*; an event which has occasioned infinite joy in the theatrical circles, and not less astonishment in all who have heard of that extraordinary man's talents. That a performer who has for years been more than any other, distinguished by public favour at home, and had it in his power to acquire there, an annual income of five thousand pounds sterling, should in advanced life traverse the Atlantic, and migrate to a country so remote from his own, on a professional speculation, was a thing apparently so much at variance with reason and probability, that any man who but a week before it happened, had been hardy enough to suggest a likelihood of its taking place, would be considered either a fool or a banterer. When the first intelligence of Mr. Cooke's having embarked for America reached Philadelphia, though it was stated upon good authority, the incredulity of the people resisted every assurance of the fact, and it was not till a detailed account of his having performed the character of Richard III on the stage of Newyork appeared

in the daily prints of that city that the public doubts upon the subject were entirely dispelled. That this great and unexpected acquisition makes not only the most brilliant era in the stage history of the United States, but holds forth to the old world an incontestible proof of the unexampled advancement of this young country in taste, refinement, and literature, as well as in opulence and prosperity, cannot be denied, nor do we think there is any candid American who will dissent from us when we affirm, that from this circumstance, so very flattering to our national feelings, the thanks of the country is due to Mr. Cooper in the first instance; perhaps in some degree too, to the liberality of some other managers in encouraging him to the execution of that laudable but hazardous enterprize.

In point of pecuniary risk, the public will (at least we hope and believe so) indemnify Mr. Cooper. The sum he has undertaken to pay Mr. Cook, though it would have been a very inadequate temptation to a prudent man in that gentleman's circumstances, to leave his country, is immensely great; yet the praise due to Mr. Cooper for his spirit in that respect is small when compared with the applause he merits on another and a nobler principle. The day before Mr. Cooke's arrival, Cooper stood confessedly at the head of the American stage—he now stands but second: Let it be remembered too, that no man more fairly appreciated, or has more liberally spoken of the great superiority of Cooke than he has; so that when he resolved upon bringing him over to this country, he was perfectly sensible that he was introducing not merely a superior that would outshine him, but an actor whose extraordinary powers must open to the American public a new and far more clear and correct view than they could ever have had before, of what is excellent and what censurable in the art: In a word, one who would hold up to them a light, to which a person in Mr. Cooper's situation, if he were actuated only by selfish views, would not be very desirous to help them to. Garrick with all his might, would as soon have thrust one of his fingers into the fire as have done the same. On the best grounds, therefore, we say that the country is largely indebted to Mr. Cooper, whose conduct in the business can scarcely be over-rated, displaying a liberal spirit, and a dignified



scorn of those mean jealousies which are too generally found to taint the hearts of men in all professions, and certainly in none more than in that to which he belongs.

Having discharged this debt of justice to Mr. Cooper, we will say a few words of the great and accomplished actor he has brought among us. Though we have not seen Mr. Cooke since his arrival in America, we know him perfectly well as an actor. For many years he was a subject of admiration, a constant source of delight, an inexhaustible theme, and affluent topic of critical examination and consequent praise to some of the most enlightened critics in London, whose opinions respecting him were exactly the same as ours. There are few characters he has played in which we have not seen him frequently, and a thousand times heard his merits and defects in them canvassed; we therefore make no scruple of speaking of him by anticipation, and confidently assert that there have been few men in the world whom nature has more fully endowed for the profession of an actor, not one now living who possesses such ample means of giving satisfaction to a critical mind and uncorrupted natural taste, when his talents have fair play, and are left unobscured by occasional *infirmity*. It was at an advanced time of life he first appeared in the British metropolis; as in America, so there, he made his debut in Richard, of which character he may be said to have ever since held the exclusive possession. At once his powers operated upon the London audience in a way unexampled in the annals of the British theatre, and scarcely to be credited if not demonstrated by frequent matter of fact. Never in his long and illustrious life, marked as it was by public favour and admiration, was Garrick permitted to take the slightest liberty with the people: had he but once been guilty of a *certain irregularity*, he would have been banished from the stage; but such is the fascination in which this favourite has for years held the public mind, that he has done even as it has pleased his fancy, without materially shaking, or in any great degree impairing his popularity. This is a circumstance than which nothing imaginable can convey a more forcible idea of the extent and power of his genius; and it is only with that view we advert to it.

From a friend at Newyork, to whom we had often communicated our opinions of Cooke, we received a letter written as it should seem on the very night of that actor's first appearance there in Richard III. Part of which letter we offer to the perusal of our readers, as it contains some strictures as just and accurate as if the author had studied Cooke for years.

"I am just now returned from the theatre, and late though it is, cannot bring myself to go to bed till I have set down for your perusal a few of the multitude of thoughts and new ideas with which I have been impressed by the performance of Cooke in Richard III. I must in candour first own to you that I always thought your description of his powers greatly exaggerated, and (you must not be affronted) in my bosom attributed to overwrought national prejudice, your assertion, that we on this side of the Atlantic had not yet had an opportunity of seeing and therefore could not form an adequate idea of the perfection to which the great actors of the good old school, as you used to call it, had carried the art. I now confess to you that the highest summit of my conceptions of the subject fell infinitely short of the excellence of this extraordinary man. Extraordinary indeed in many respects, as I understand, but I verily believe most extraordinary as an actor. All I have seen before was boy's play to this night's exhibition: yet an English gentleman who sat by my side, and was, I believe, a competent judge, assured me that Richard was by no means considered as Cooke's best character by the more enlightened critics. He adduced the opinion of Mrs. Inchbald, to which, since my return home I have referred, and find it exactly concurs with his: you may see it in her prefatory remarks to the play of Richard III in her *British Theatre*. He owned indeed that the British people in general gave Cooke precedence to all other actors in this character. In the course of the performance however he concurred in the applause so lavishly bestowed on Cooke, and in one part only, viz. where Richard starts up from his frightful dream in the tent, hinted the superiority of any other actor. In that part he said Kemble took the lead. I cannot well conceive it, but I am now prepared to believe any thing.

"Cooke's figure aided by dress and fictitious deformity, and his wonderful face, so perfectly fill up the idea of Richard, that I am disposed to think, if Shakspeare were to rise from the dead he would own him the exact representative of his imagination. Cooke's Richard is not an ordinary hunch-back, dwarfed and feeble with deformity. A formidable brawny military figure, well fitted for achievements in arms, and a face strongly marked, with eyes piercing and lively, a very large Roman nose, and a long and broad protuberant chin, conveyed at his very first entrance such a characteristic idea of the formidable crook-backed tyrant as I had never before imagined likely to exist. Had he only walked in as a masquerade figure of Richard without uttering a word, it would have been more to my satisfaction than the whole of any Richard I have seen. He spoke—his voice finished the picture; for though eminently variable as well as powerful, he had either from nature or misuse of it (it may be one of his perfections that he can assume it when necessary,) a harshness truly characteristic of Richard. It occasionally '*grated harsh thunder.*'

"I never before witnessed a soliloquy spoken on the stage so as to represent solitary self conference: Cooke really appeared alone. Of the emphatic force as well as the distinctness, correctness and precision of his speech, you must hear it to form any thing like an adequate conception. Were it not for the natural ease with which it flows from him it might pass for too precise; but that notion is at once scouted by the felicity with which he delivered himself. I own that there is a deficiency of gracefulness in his figure unsuitable to the representative of a prince of our highly refined modern times, but which I think allies him more closely to the coarse age that Richard lived in, and to the brutal character depicted by the poet. So characteristic a personal *toute ensemble*, I imagine has very seldom, perhaps never been exhibited on any stage.

"Were I to enumerate all the beauties of his performance I should recite almost every sentence of the character, some parts however were astonishing, prodigious, or to use your own words *frightfully great*. Such I take to be his furious rejection of Buckingham's suit.

"I'm busy—thou troublest me—I'm not i' th' vein."

"And such too is his scene with Stanley, particularly the diabolical sardonic grin and tone with which he says, "*Well as you guess.*"

"But of the whole of this wonderful piece of acting, that which seems to me to leave all the others behind, indeed to beggar the most affluent description, is the first scene of the fourth act in which he alternately meditates and gives instructions to Catesby and Norfolk. Here the powers of the superior actor were visible to every eye. As was said of Garrick, by a man who had been born deaf, *his face was a language.* That short scene, though containing in the whole but sixteen lines, employed him many minutes, during every instant of which, his countenance displayed an infinite variety of feelings and emotions, making his silent meditation more eloquent and impressive even than the language of the poet."

Assuredly the Richard of Cooke though superior to any other, is not his best performance. There is an inequality in it, which cannot be perceived in his Iago, his Kiteley, or his sir Pertinax Mac Sycophant, in which last character he is acknowledged to surpass Macklin himself. And here, in justice to the play of the Man of the World, and still more to the liberality and good sense of the Scotch, we must remark that in no part of the British empire; not in London or even in Dublin, are the characters of sir Pertinax or sir Archy Mac Sarcasm more admired or more often called for than in Edinburgh. Macklin in his lifetime, and Cooke since, having been frequently engaged to go there for the express purpose of gratifying that judicious and enlightened audience with those satires upon, not the Scotch nation, but some well known bad members of it.

But though Richard is not Cooke's best, it is still a voluptuous dramatic feast. His Shylock is not less so. His Iago is perfect, uniform and equal. His Cato, King John, Zanga, Orsino, and Sciolto too, are inimitably fine, but that in which he chiefly excels, is in the delineation of subtle, complicated villainy. In Iago for instance he makes a deep impression; and here, though so uniformly excellent, there are some passages in which he displays more than usual ingenuity and natural force.



One is his treacherous apology mixed up with accusation of Cassio; and we venture to say that there is nothing in the histrionic art to surpass, if to equal the address of his underplay to Othello.

In several of his comic characters there is a rich luxuriance of humour and expression, without the slightest tincture of buffoonery or trick. Cooke never has recourse to the paltry (unpardonable too as we think) expedients of playing the fool to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh. No—he steadily adheres to the letter and spirit of his author, and rests confidently secure of producing all the desirable effect by the plain undulterated natural exercise of his own genius and organs. His Falstaff, though it essentially differs from that of Henderson and every other actor we have seen, is no doubt more conformable to the ideas of Shakspeare. Any one who has considered the character well must have observed that there is not a particle of good nature in the composition of it. Falstaff is jovial, selfishly; but even in his merriment he discloses a malignant, sarcastic spirit, which he lets forth in satire, jibe and calumny. Cooke gives the drollery of the fat knight such a rich characteristic expression of that kind with voice and face and emphasis, as no man, since Quin, has even thought of attempting.

There is this difference between Cooke and almost all other actors. He resorts to no stage trick and uses no unnatural gesticulations, or mechanical dispositions of his limbs; practices no grimace; has no affected pauses, starts, attitudes or intonations; but acts “e’en like the folks of this world.” He neither frisks about the stage nor whirls his arms, nor does, in a word, as most players do, every thing that nobody does in common life. Quick who was indebted to old Macklin for his rise, once waited on the veteran to get his instructions how to play Mordecai the Jew, in his farce of *Love-a-la-Mode*. “Pray sir,” said the old man, “do you yet know the *first qualification of an actor?*” “perhaps not sir,” said Quick, “but if you will have the goodness to tell me, I will endeavour to practise it.” “Why sir, it is contained in one short sentence, ‘*Learn to stand still!*’” This part of the art, which one would think easy enough, if it were not so seldom found, Cooke possesses among others.

In general, whatever be the character which Cooke plays it is, in his treatment, an exquisite picture of nature, in the portraying of which, disdaining detail, and careless of the elaborated refinements of the art, he contrives by one bold and vigorous, yet simple outline, and *a few* masterly touches of the pencil to give the most grand, perfect, and impressive likeness imaginable. And in a word, as he assuredly is the safest and perhaps the only safe model now living, by the study of which young actors can improve themselves in their profession, we strongly recommend Mr. Cooke to their particular attention.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE MIRROR OF TASTE.

From my earliest days I have been fond of theatrical entertainments; and as I advance in life find that passion of my youth sanctioned by my reason, and approved by my moral feelings; I am therefore a pretty constant visitor of our theatre, where, thanks to our excellent managers, a banquet of one kind or other, fitted to gratify the most refined taste, is four times a week laid out for the public. But, sir, the pleasure imparted by the scene performed on the stage is very much diminished by some which pass in the boxes, and which I solemnly affirm, are a foul disgrace to a civilised people. In the most vitiated of the old corrupted nations of Europe there is nothing that I know, to equal the impudent outrages committed in our theatre upon the modest women of the audience, by the open dalliance of thoughtless men, with noted public impures.

I am not one of those straitlaced old fellows who demand it of youth to become ascetics. To expect that young men will entirely renounce the sensual pleasures is to hope for that which never yet could be accomplished; but even in vicious gratifications there are degrees of turpitude, and the trespasses of human infirmity may on the one hand be tempted to venialness, or on the other inflamed to unpardonable guilt, by their concomitant circumstances. One of the most wise, pure, and refined of chris-

tian philosophers, speaking of the mixed system of opinion and sentiment arising from the ancient chivalry, which in the best ages of the christian world ennobled mankind, says that under it "*vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness.*"—But in the undisguised practice, the shameless open avowal of unclean purposes, there is a grossness which cancels every palliative plea on the score of human infirmity, and reduces the offender to a rank below the brute creation.

I remember the time when no young man dared to insult the public, by wanton dalliance or familiar conversation in a public theatre with women of the town. The audience would have chastised the offender on the spot, and abated the nuisance by throwing him into the streets. After such an ignominious display of his own shame he would never have been admitted into respectable company: The old would have frowned him out of the circles of domestic intercourse—the young would have shrunk from his company for fear of being inculpated along with him: our young ladies would have turned with disgust from an object so loathsome; and our matrons have shut him out from their daughters, as they would one infected with the yellow fever, or the Syrian pestilence. But now what do we see? Why, every play night, we see abandoned, shameless, profligate men in good clothes, sitting with the most notorious of the impure sisterhood—laughing, toying, and familiarly conversing with them, in the very eyes, and within ear-shot of virtuous ladies.

This public offence passing unpunished, and unrebuked, is certainly the infallible diagnostic of a system of morals and manners deteriorated beyond example, and gradually, but not slowly, degenerating into the rankest corruption. Every youth, however loose in his morals, looks forward to the marriage state, and settles it with himself, that, sometime or other he must take a wife, if it be only as a household circumstance. Universally, therefore, young men must be supposed desirous to cultivate the good graces of the virtuous part of the sex: indeed they seem generally well enough disposed that way, and no doubt employ such means as they think will best conduce to recommend them. With this object in view then, what must be their

opinion of our ladies, if they think that open intimacy with the degraded part of the sex will operate as a recommendation to their favour? and that this is in some sort their opinion, appears from the conduct I allude to; for instead of concealing their purposes or intimating them privately, by a wink, a significant look, a hem, or even the sultanic hint of dropping the handkerchief, they seem to be desirous to have it seen to glory in the vile traffic, and actually speak so loud at times, as to interrupt and annoy those who wish to hear the play. The titter of the impure, and the dull chatter of her stupid wooer, are not infrequently louder than the words of the actor. The stentorian lungs of Warren himself are no more than sufficient to drown the clack of these abominables. I wish I had it in my power to confine these animadversions to the young; but I cannot, regarding strict truth, do so. Men who ought to be at home training their children and grand children in a very different kind of morality, may be seen (a little more slyly to be sure than the young) exposing their infirmity by awkward playfulness with those damsels, and luxuriating in prurient flippancy, when they would be, more appropriately, at home wrapt up in flannel.

It is the peculiar nature of the moral evil arising from offences of this kind to spread itself with uniformly increasing fecundity. The contagion of example, and the temptation of impurity seduce the young of one sex into a total disregard of the very semblance of virtue. I affirm that even in the cool moments of deliberate reflection, when the appetite is wholly unsolicited by temptation, the avowed doctrine of a vast number of the young men of this city is, that a violation of certain commandments is not only guiltless but laudable. What can tend more certainly or directly to encourage this pernicious notion in our youth, than the example so constantly held out to them in our theatres of libidiny and prostitution publicly, triumphantly, and boastfully avowed. On the other hand let us consider the gradual effect upon that sex on whose purity the whole of human happiness depends. Does it never occur to the fathers of families or to the matrons of this once virtuous city, that constantly witnessing the abominations I allude to, must necessarily beget associations in the young female mind, which, to say no worse of



them, must sully that internal purity of thought, that exquisite refined delicacy of sentiment, without which, even the most robust personal chastity loses all its lustre, and a great part of its value.

If young men think that by such a shameless display of indecency they show their manhood or their gallantry, they are foolish, even beyond the privilege allowed to coxcombs. True gallantry, like true valour, unostentatious and disdainful of parade, retires from the view, and carries its qualifications and its enjoyments into the shade, while conscious impotency, like conscious cowardice, are ever on the strain to patch up their constitutional flaws with scraps of brag, and by gasconade to obtain credit for qualifications which nature has denied them.—When, therefore, I see any man, whether young or old, publicly parading his virility, I make it a rule, in which I am oftener right than wrong, to set him down as a miserable impostor a feeble quack in the science of gallantry.

For some time before the commencement of this season I, and several others who think as I do, pampered ourselves with the hope that these unhappy marauders would be excluded from the possibility of mixing with women of character, and that a place would be appropriated to them suitable to their degraded state: but instead of that they now find their way into the lower boxes, where they gayly converse with the young men, and impudently confront the chaste part of the sex. This is an excess which never was, and I firmly believe never will be permitted in England.

A few nights ago I animadverted upon this subject to a friend of mine in the lower boxes who pointed out to me a troop of women of ill fame that had got seated there. He said he did not see how it could be remedied, since in the different gradations from private concubinage, down to public prostitution there were many who could not be so distinctly known to come within the limits of a prohibition, as to justify their expulsion. To this my answer was, that if they were not evidently such, their exclusion was not necessary; but that where they were notoriously of the trade, they could be distinguished from others by their dress and behaviour. But alas, poor creatures,

is the fault all theirs? Is it for the entertainment of the play they pay their dollar?—No—they would seldom, if ever be found in that place if there were not young men there to encourage them. They come, not to the play, but to a market.

I have run out this letter to a great length; but the subject demanded it, and I shall rejoice in my labour, if it produces any salutary effect. That, however, I rather doubt; yet it may occasion the topic to be taken up by others. If there be any offence against which *personal* public scourging in the newspapers would be an advisable weapon, this is it. If no other expedient can be found, adequate to the removal of this evil, a unanimous combination of the various editors to hunt it down, ought, as a matter of public importance, to be resorted to.

AN OLD PHILADELPHIAN.

November 30th, 1810.

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## DRAMATIC CENSOR.

### OPENING OF THE PHILADELPHIA THEATRE.

THE delay in the publication of this Number enables us to include in it, contrary to expectation and to regular arrangement, an account of the opening of this Theatre, which took place on the Evening of Monday the 26th November. Exactly as we predicted the improvements struck the audience with astonishment and delight. The house was as full as if it were a new play, or a great favourite actor for his first appearance that was to be seen, and one unanimous buzz of approbation pervaded the audience. The performers, as they appeared, received their accustomed greeting, and the managers came in for a double share, being saluted with several successive rounds of plaudits. They did right in choosing the *Way to get Married* for their open-

ing. Caustic and Tangent being among the very best performances of Warren and Wood.

The Agreeable Surprise followed. Jefferson's Lingo, is a feast of rich, genuine, characteristic humour. A plague upon the stale trick of smothering up Rusty Fusty's head in the cloak say I, Marry and amen!

Such sorry arts  
Are double faults in men of real parts.

—  
2d Night.

WEDNESDAY, 28th November.

MACBETH AND PRISONER AT LARGE.

The House was still more full than on Monday Evening. The first appearance of Mrs. Twaits, added to the new attractions of the Theatre, operated upon the public mind to the considerable emolument of the managers.—Macbeth was the play—Macbeth by Wood.

The strange superstition, or, as doctor Johnson has it, the general infatuation on which this tragedy is founded, though at one time as prevalent on this side of the Atlantic [as it ever was on the other, possesses now so little influence, and indeed is so little understood here, that Macbeth loses much of its original importance in representation, and makes less impression on the feelings and fancies of the people of these states than it does on the inhabitants of the British Islands, who are in all classes, well prepared for its reception—the more enlightened, like those of our country, by a cultivated taste for poetic fiction.—The multitude by the remains of their old superstitions, which though somewhat diminished in a transmission of centuries, from generation to generation, still retain the power of warmly influencing the imagination of the vulgar, adding not a little to the aggregate mass of their miseries and delights. We remember the time when the witchcraft scenes of Macbeth were viewed with awe and contemplated with a chilling and sublime sensation of fear. But now, what with the contempt in which superstitions of every kind are held by the audience in general, and what with the Jackpudding ribaldry of those who perform the witches, this most solemn, sublime, and im-

pressive of all dramatic productions, frequently excites laughter where it ought to impart awful emotions, and is only preserved from the ludicrous in many of its noblest passages, by very extraordinary tragic powers in those who act the two principal parts of Macbeth and his lady.

Of all the characters that enrich the British Drama, the most difficult by far to delineate well, is that of Macbeth. Nor is that of his lady much less difficult. When the ambitious thane is represented by an actor in whom all the great variety of requisites for performing it are combined, no character makes so deep an impression on an audience. Such an actor, however, has been rarely found. Not only brilliant genius, sound judgment, lively sensibility and a heart quick to take flame from the poet's fire, but corporeal vigour and animation, with physical organs of the most perfect, powerful, and versatile kinds, are necessary to accomplish a finished portraiture of this arduous part. Where any one of these is wanting, Macbeth can be made but a very lukewarm affair in representation. Stage history enumerates the names of a long line of actors who attempted Macbeth, only four of whom succeeded to common intent. Wilkes, Cibber's partner, a great actor, immortalized by the applause of the Spectator and by the eulogy of Dr. Johnson, failed—Powell failed, Quin fell short of it—Holland, Reddish, and the later Powell failed, and the admirable Spranger Barry, though the reputable rival of Garrick in many characters, and, as Murphy says, his superiour in some, attempted Macbeth, but could make no impression. Betterton, Garrick, Sheridan, Mossop, and Henderson only had the power to inscribe their names with a deep impression in stage history, coupled with the name of Macbeth. Kemble, about equals Reddish, and Cooke is perhaps upon an average as good as Quin, no more.—To display the multitude of conflicting passions, the turbulent emotions of soul, the dreadful agitations of mind—the remorse and consequent anguish—the terrific mixture of rage, confusion, despair and frenzy, and finally the horrible throes and agonies of Macbeth demands an assemblage of powers mental and corporeal that has rarely fallen to the share of any one man.

If a sound judgment and a good taste with moderate physical powers could sufficiently stead an actor in Macbeth, Mr. Wood



would not be wrong in attempting it. But so obviously are some of the requisites, in their full force, wanting in this gentleman that we were surprized at his hazarding the attempt, and could not help wondering that his spirit should so overrule his better judgment as to suggest that he could add to his professional repute by grappling with an object so much too large for his grasp.

The foregoing general reflections occurred to us before we saw the performance, which in no way tended to remove them, indeed could not, because the grounds of them are radical and not at all susceptible of removal. At the same time, it would be doing great injustice not to remark that the action of the play sometimes met shameful interruption in its most important passages, from the rude vociferation and boisterous conduct of the *Ladies and Gentlemen* in the Pit and Gallery, whom even the music of *Macbeth*, (the first of all compositions) failed to attract or settle down into a calm: A circumstance the more miraculous as it is highly probable that a good round number of the Ladies, both above and below, have learned to play music, and have their *pyanoes* in the parlour, tuned or untuned; if for nothing else, to make up the *furnisher* of the room, and keep the children from crying.

We should wrong our opinion of Mr. Wood, if we ascribed his undertaking this fit only for a giant, to any motive that was not creditable to him in some shape or other, however injudicious. If he conceived that lady *Macbeth* was the character in which Mrs. Twaites would appear to greatest advantage it was natural and not altogether incorrect in him to run the risk, because no one was to be had who could play the *thane*. But in that too there was, in our judgment an error: there are many characters in which Mrs. Twaites might have appeared to much greater advantage. There are many in which she is excellent, but under the weight of lady *Macbeth* she totters; who is she, (a few, very few happy ones excepted) who have not sunk under the weight of that tremendous, important character?

Of the value of laudable ambition, none can be more sensible than ourselves. To that noble impulse mankind are indebted for a great portion of the benefits and pleasures they derive

from the bold exercise of human talents and powers of every denomination. It is a noble virtue; but it too often injures the possessor; and, vaulting too high, o'er leaps itself and falls on the other side. We therefore find less pleasure in contemplating Mrs. Twaites's personation of lady Macbeth than we have felt in witnessing her performance in the tragedy of *ADELGITHA*. The character of *Adelgitha* though much inferior to that of *Lady Macbeth* is by no means an unimportant one; yet it is one which Mrs. Twaites sustains with considerable respectability. In the impassioned scenes with Michael Ducas, her feelings were strongly expressed, and the despair which his wicked arts acting upon her deplorable situation, excites in the agonized bosom of *Adelgitha* was portrayed naturally and yet with much art too.—Her business, as it is technically called, was in general very good—in some places admirable; but in her speaking Mrs. Twaites has caught the current monotony of the day, and her reading is not always perfectly correct. This lady has for years been, as an actress, a favourite of ours. We contemplated with pleasure her early promise, and predicted her elevation to a considerable rank in the profession: and it is perhaps, for this reason we are so precise with her. It is not often that we deem it salutary, or likely to be productive of effect, to enlarge upon the faults of the ladies of the stage, nor is it often that the object of criticism could sustain it without injury. But Mrs. Twaites has a sufficiency of sterling ore to stand the assay, and we respect her talents too much not to be plain with her.

## TO THE EDITORS OF THE MIRROR.

## OBSERVATIONS ON ALONZO KING OF CASTILE, A TRAGEDY.

I have waited with some degree of impatience for a dissertation upon Mr. Lewis's tragedy of Alphonso, promised in your number for May last. As Alphonso is a production, which, with all its faults, I greatly admire, and yet hear many others condemn, I have been not a little anxious to see what a veteran dramatic critic would say of it, and flattered myself that our opinions on that subject would agree, as they have pretty generally done on most of the topics hitherto discussed in the *Mirror of Taste*.

I have heard this tragedy pronounced unnatural, extravagant and uninteresting, and its style bombastical, inflated and tumid, with I don't know how many more epithets suggested by the itch, so common to critics, and particularly to the more superficial ones of displaying sagacity at the expense of poor authors, and actors, and indeed very much at their own.

“Miracles of learning,

“They point out faults to show their own discerning,

“And critic like, bestriding martyr'd sense,

“Proclaim their judgment and vast consequence.”

Without entering into a detailed controversy upon the proposition of those *sapient sirs*, I will hazard an opinion of my own, derived not so much from erudition profound or fancied as from feeling and a natural judgment which, if not much improved, has neither been warped nor soured by severe study. It has indeed little learning to recommend it; but I flatter myself, it has some share of certain other ingredients less known among the herd of critics even than learning itself; I mean candour, and good nature.

In Europe, Alphonso, in common with all the productions of Mr. Lewis, has had its full share of eulogy and censure. The former could only be exacted by its merits: the latter no work can possibly escape till it shall please God to alter the nature of man. If from the voluminous body of criticism that has fallen

periodically from the press, at least for some few years past, the contributions of malice and prejudice, of pride and vanity were withdrawn, many a bending shelf would be eased of its burthen. No man has experienced more of this than Mr. Lewis; no man could bear it with more unremitted good humour. Besides the ordinary motives already alluded to, there was one to the operation of which Mr. Lewis, was more than most other men exposed, by his situation, we mean political rancour, which has for some years embittered the hearts of men beyond all former example, and engendered an active malevolence which lets nothing alone, and taints all that it touches, and which in Great Britain as well as elsewhere has suborned literature to be the pander of injustice, corrupted criticism from its integrity, and poisoned at the very head, that once great public fountain of judgment and taste. The man who while his father held a lucrative office under government, dared to be the friend of Mr. Fox could not, in such a state of things, hope to pass unslandered, and even a right honourable minister did not think it beneath him to descend from his high office of secretary, to become the lampooner of Mr. Lewis.

Such a tide of influence on public opinion, what writer could hope to stem? Unfortunately, for the poet of Alphonso, his first work of notoriety was, though pre-eminently ingenious, tainted with some little immoralities, such as would naturally enough flow from the pen of a youth, filled with poetic fire and over whose unripened mind fancy exercised her most despotic dominion. This furnished his interested adversaries with specious grounds of impeachment against the moral tendency of his works, while his inconsiderate adoption of the marvellous, hobgoblin system then in fashion, furnished them with topics of ridicule and sneer upon his taste and judgment. Thus his few youthful blemishes were dexterously turned upon him with infinite exaggeration, while his far more numerous beauties were uncandidly suppressed. Here and there a bold and honest critic stood up in his support, but was soon giped down again. The flippant rhymes of Canning would be more potent to destroy than the majestic eulogies of Johnson, if he were alive, to save.



The most censurable production of the author of *Alphonso*, is also his best. The monk, from which he has received the cognomination of *Monk Lewis*, though tainted by a few loose descriptions, is still the work of a master, and replete with the brilliant effusions of a superior genius. Yet it has been so roughly treated, that timid critics have been afraid to speak their mind, or to commend the great mass, which is excellent, for fear of being suspected of giving their sanction to the few parts, which are censurable: but the honest, bold, and judicious critic, undismayed and regardless of the puny assaults of adversaries, will separate the little dross from the sterling gold, and throw the latter into fair circulation. It grieves me to remark that the author of "*The Pursuits of Literature*" with a want of candour unbecoming his high station, has directed his bitter criticism against the few objectionable parts only, and made not the great general mass of value of the work, but the exceptions to it, the subjects of his scrutiny. What is worse, the same dull ground is trod over by others; the same hacknied attacks are made against him day after day, while the writers conveniently forget to state, that he has not only cut out in a new edition, all that was censurable in the first, but spurned at an offer of a thousand pounds made to him for liberty to publish another edition of the *Monk* in its original shape: nay, though he has publicly declared that he will prosecute any one who attempts to print it surreptitiously. Pruned, as it has been by Mr. L. the moral of the *Monk* is now excellent. And here, I cannot but quote the opinion of one of the most respectable of the British critics when speaking of *The Monk*. "And who" says he "for the sake of a few blemishes in the novel, (*pauca maculae*) could consent to sacrifice his acquaintance with the nobly drawn and instructive character of *Ambrosio* or to feel no interest in the loves of him and his superior, even in strength of character, *Matilda*?—none. The monk will be read while works of fancy can charm; and when count *Fathom*, and the *Mysteries of Udolpho* are the theme, the name of *Lewis*, will not be far off."

Nothing in the tragedy of *Alphonso* has the slightest tendency to lay Mr. *Lewis* open to the charge of immorality. The caviller therefore must take his station upon other grounds. But

let him indulge himself, while without considering what his cavils may be, I proceed to a consideration of the play.

The time and the place in which the scene is laid, are happily chosen: the time the fourteenth century, a period sufficiently remote for that illusive obscurity, necessary to dramatic effect, and so marked with the spirit of chivalry as to give enough of *vrai semblance* to any deeds of hardihood, heroism, magnanimity, or violence. The place, Spain—where the chivalrous character remained, long after it had sunk into disrepute in other countries; and which being split into several sovereignties, each independent of and separate from the rest, supplied in the probabilities of private domestic life, a greater diversity of plot, contrivance, character, and incident, than any other; and, for historical drama, a more wide range for genius to expatiate. Of these advantages Mr. Lewis has availed himself, and as an intermixture of authentic history is, at least, useful to the structure of a good tragedy, he has made a happy selection of historical facts and personages. The reign of Alphonso, the eleventh king of Castile surnamed "The Good" has furnished him with the very best model for a king; while the intrigues and wickedness of Alphonso's son Peter, surnamed "The Cruel" supplied him with the means of carrying on his plan, and bringing about his catastrophe without any violent outrage on nature, on historical truth, or on probability.

As your readers have already the whole play before them, I refrain from giving it in summary, but will merely start such points, and advert to such passages, as will, I think, serve to establish the high opinion I entertain of the value of the play, and the talents of the author.

Blair, in his lecture on tragedy, says, "Virtue has, happily, such power over the human mind, by the wise and gracious constitution of our nature, that as admiration cannot be raised in epic poetry, so neither in tragic poetry can our passions be strongly moved, unless virtuous emotions be raised within us." I scarcely know any part of any drama more calculated to raise virtuous emotions than the very first act of Alphonso, which presents a rich tissue of the most natural and affecting virtue, in

the paternal tenderness of that good king, and the filial piety of his lovely daughter, Amelrosa; whose character the author in some sort illustrates in the first two speeches she utters to her attendants:

Oh, look my ladies, how yon beauteous rose  
O'ercharg'd with dew, bends its fair head to earth  
Emblem of sorrowing virtue. [*to Inis*] Woud'st thou break it?  
See'st not its silken leaves are stain'd with tears?  
Ever, my Inis, where thou find'st those traces,  
Show thou most kindness, most respect. I'll raise it,  
And bind it gently to its neighbouring rose;  
So shall it live, and still its blushing bosom  
Yield the mild bee, its little love, repose.

*Inis.* It's love!—can flowers then love?

*Amelrosa.* Oh! what cannot?

There 's nothing lives in air, on earth, in ocean,  
But lives to love! For when the great unknown  
Parted the elements, and out of chaos  
Formed this fair world with one blessed word,  
That word was love! Angels with golden clarions,  
Prolong'd in heavenly strain the heavenly sound;  
The mountain echoes caught it; the four winds  
Spread it rejoicing o'er the world of waters;  
And since that hour, in forest, or by fountain,  
O'er hill or moor, whate'er be nature's song,  
Love is her theme—Love, universal Love.

Oppressed with sorrow by the rebellion of his wicked son, the good Alphonso now appears, and the tender, pious Amelrosa meets him with—

*Am.* My father! my dear father!

*Alfonso.* Heaven's best dews  
Fall on thy beauteous head, my Amelrosa,  
And be each drop a blessing! Cheer'd by morning  
Fair smile the skies, but nothing smiles on me  
Till I have seen thee well, and know thee happy.

*Amelrosa.* And I were happy, if my eyes perceived not  
Tears clouding thine.

Lamenting the unnatural defection of his son, Alphonso says to her in an agony of grief—

Poor wretched man,  
Where shall I turn me!—Where, since lust of power

Makes a son faithless, find a friend that's true?

Where fly for comfort!—

*Amelrosa.* To this heart, my father!

This heart which, while it throbs, shall throb to love thee.

Stream thy dear eyes! my hands shall dry those tears;

Achs thy poor head! my bosom shall support it!

And when thou sleep'st, I'll watch thy dreams, and pray.

Chang'd be to joy the sorrow which afflicts

My king, my father, and my soul's best friend.

In the second act Cæsario, the villain of the play, the purposed regicide and usurper and now the demagogue, unfolds the nature of his character finely: To a mob who follow him shouting "long live Cæsario" he first addresses his flattering

Thanks, worthy friends—No further!—

Kind friends, farewell!

But no sooner are they gone off shouting and huzzaing, than he breaks out:

Ay, shout ye brawlers, shout;

Pour out unmeaning praise till the skies ring!

'Twill school your deep ton'd throats to roar tomorrow

"Long live Cæsario, sovereign of Castile!"

A poet never more essentially advances the moral interests of mankind, or inculcates more effectually virtuous principles than when he exhibits bad men paying the tribute of compulsory acknowledgment and admiration to the beauty and comforts of virtue. Of this kind is the following apostrophe to truth which the author puts into the mouth of the villain Cæsario:

Oh! truth!

How my soul longs once more to join thy train,

Tear off the mask, and show me as I am!

The wretch for life immur'd, the christian slave

Of pagan lords, or he whose bloody sweat

Speeds the fleet galley o'er the sparkling waves,

Bears easy toil, light chains, and pleasant bondage

Weigh'd with thy service, falsehood! Still to smile

On those we loath; to teach the lips a system

Smooth, sweet, and false; to watch the tell-tale eye.

Fashion each feature, sift each honest word

That swells upon the tongue, and fear to find

A traitor in oneself! By Heaven I know

No toil, no slavery, like dissembling



The good Alphonso in the fulness of affection, contrition and regrets, seeks Orsino at his caved retreat and deprecates the resentment of his injured friend, but finds Orsino inexorable. An admirable scene ensues

*Alphonso.* Proofs appeared so strong—

*Orsino.* And had I none to prove

My innocence? These deep hewn scars, received  
While fighting in your cause, were these no proofs?  
Your life twice saved by me! Your very breath  
My gift! Your crown oft rescued by my valour!  
Were these no proofs? Oh! they had been conviction  
In a friend's eyes, though they were none in thine.

*Alfonso.* Your pride! 'Twas that undid me! your reserve,  
Your silence.

*Orsino.* What! should I have stoop'd to chase  
Your brawling lawyers through their flaws and quibbles,  
To bear the sneers of saucy questioners—  
Their jests, their lies, and when they term'd me villain  
Calmly to cry "Good sir, I am none!—No, no.  
I heard myself call'd traitor—Saw you calmly  
Hear me so called, nor strike the speaker dead?  
Then why defend myself?—What hope was left me?  
Truth lost its value, since you thought me false;  
Speech had been vain, since you spoke not for me.

*Alphonso.* Think I had other duties than a friend."

Nothing however can shake Orsino, who stung by reflection on the irreparable loss of his wife, and, as he thinks, of his child, refuses reconciliation and proudly dismisses the king

Go, sir, go!

Regain your court! resume your pomp and splendour!  
Drink deep of luxury's cup! be gay, be flattered,  
Pamper'd and proud, and, if thou canst be happy!  
I'll to my cave and curse thee.

The next part I mean to notice is the scene where Cæsario, who has been lurking in Alphonso's bosom with intent to destroy him and usurp the crown, introduces himself to Orsino, discloses to him that he is his son and reveals to him his bloody purpose of revenging his father's, mother's, and his own wrongs by the destruction of Alphonso. This is an admirable scene, and has been considered particularly interesting, as Mr. Lewis is known to have

intended to make Orsino speak the feelings and language of Mr. Fox, who though he always considered himself as greatly wronged by his sovereign, never failed to speak of his majesty's conduct to all other men as deserving of praise.

*Orsino.* Art my son, and yet a villain?

*Caesario.* (Starting) A villain!

*Orsino.* Destroy Alfonso?—What Alfonso the good?

*Caesario.* Has he not wrong'd thee?

*Orsino.* Deeply boy—most deeply!

But in his whole wide kingdom, none but me!

Look through Castile! see all smile, bloom and flourish!

No peasant sleeps e'er he has breath'd a blessing

On his good king! No thirst of power, false pride

Or martial rage, he knows? nor would he shed

One drop of subject blood to buy the title

Of a new Mars! E'en broken hearted widows

And childless mothers, while they weep the slain,

Cursing the wars, confess his cause was just!

Such is Alfonso, such the man whose virtues

Now fill thy throne, Castile, to bless thy children!

What shows the adverse scale? What find we there?

My sufferings, mine alone! And what am I

That I should weigh against the public welfare?

What are my wrongs against a sovereign's rights?

What is my curse against a nation's blessings?

*Caesario.* Yet hear me!

*Orsino.* I assist your plots! I injure

One hair that's nourish'd with Alfonso's blood!

Ha! the wrong'd subject hates the ungrateful master,

But the world's friend must love the patriot king.

*Caesario.* Amazement? Can it be Orsino speaking?

'Tis some court minion, some tool of office,

Some thread bare muse pension'd to praise the throne.

This cannot be the man whose fixt aversion —

*Orsino.* Boy, 'tis fixt as ever.

I hate him—hate him, but still own his virtues,

And tho' I hate, oh bless him heaven!

*Caesario.* What! bless the man who thought you  
Treachorous, base, ungrateful—

*Orsino.* And because he thought me such,

Shall I become the wretched thing he thought me;

Prove his suspicions just, quit the proud station

Where injur'd virtue lowers, and sink me down to

His level who oppress'd me?—Oh, not so!—  
 When hostile arms strain every nerve to crush me  
 Pang follows pang, and wrong to wrong succeeds:  
 To pay those wrongs with good, those pangs with kindness;  
 To raise the foe once fallen, bind his good breast  
 And heap with generous zeal, favours on favours,  
 Till his repentant spirit melts, and bleeds  
 To think he ever pained a heart like mine—  
 Such be my hate, such my proud soul's high object!  
 The only vengeance noble minds will take.

Nor was the picture of the present ruler of France, in the character of Cæsario, less generally recognized by the people in the following lines.

*Caesario.* Impious or just, once sworn,  
 To break it sure were shame.

*Orsino.* My son, 'twere virtue  
 When to perform it, were the worst of crimes  
 —'Twas wrong to swear, with that wrong contented;  
 A second fault cannot make right the first,  
 And acts of guilt absolve not acts of folly.

*Caesario.* GUILT? Then we war for words! I see but glory  
 Where thou seest guilt! Yet call it what thou wilt;  
 I may be guilty, but I must be great.

*Orsino.* A dreadful word.

*Caesario.* A crown, a crown invites me,  
 A glorious crown!

*Orsino.* Glorious? Oh no! true glory  
 Is not to wear a crown but to deserve one:  
 The peasant swain who leads a good man's life,  
 And dies at last a good man's death, obtains,  
 In wisdom's eye, wreaths of far brighter splendour,  
 Than he, whose wanton pride and thirst for empire,  
 Make kings his captives, and lay waste a world.

*Caesario.* And is't not glorious then to bless my country  
 By just and upright ruling? fight her battles?  
 Preserve her laws?

*Orsino.* THOU? THOU preserve her laws?  
 THOU fight her battles?—THOU?—I tell thee, boy,  
 The hand which serves its country should be pure!  
 Ambition, selfish love, vain lust of power,  
 Ravage thy head and heart!—And would'st thou hold  
 The judgment balance with an hand still red

With blood?—would'st thou dare speak a penance  
 Upon guilt, thyself so guilty?—Can'st thou hope  
 Castile will trust to thee?—God forbid!  
 Mad is the nation, mad past thought of cure,  
 Past chains and dungeons, whips, spare food, and fasting  
 Who yields the immoral man a patriot's name  
 And looks in private vice for public virtue?  
 THOU play the patriot's part! away! away!  
 Who wounds his country is the worst of monsters!  
 But good men only should presume to serve her—  
 Thy guilt once seen—

*Caesario.* And who shall see that guilt  
 When wrapt in purple, and the world's eye dazzled  
 By the o'erpowering blaze a crown emits?  
*But smile propitious on my daring crimes*  
*And all my crimes are virtues!* Mark this, father!  
*The world ne'er holds those guilty who succeed.*

By a masterly stroke, the poet makes his villain as perfectly wicked as man can be imagined. But wicked, hardened, diabolical, and incorrigible as he makes him, he yet compels him to feel acutely, though he will not obey, the monitions of conscience. How dreadfully is Cæsario's desperation, and struggles with his conscience painted in these words, after he has boasted of his superiority in guilt to all his host:

Wine, wine there,  
 For my soul's joyous!  
 Murder and I are grown familiar friends;  
 The assassin's trade is sweet! I've tasted blood  
 And thirst for more!

There are many other passages in this tragedy not less deserving of notice, but as I have already extended this to a great length I shall postpone them to another communication.

#### THEATRICUS.

To the observations of Theatricus we have briefly to add that Mr. Cooper did the poet ample justice in the representation of Orsino. Michael Ducas and Orsino are his most perfect pieces of acting, and both so equally excellent that we scarcely know to which to give the preference.



## DWYER.

Who is now performing at Charleston, S. C. and we hope will enliven our theatre before the close of the season, has lately gained a signal triumph in an honourable and spirited enterprize which, before his leaving Europe, he undertook in defence of his profession against newspaper libellers. The affair is well worth commemorating, not only as a curious scrap of stage history, but as a hint that may be useful to lawyers on some future occasion. The circumstances are these:

Dwyer being engaged in Dublin, was, at a very short notice, called upon to play, for the first time the part of Young *Mirabel*, which he, in order to serve the manager and accommodate the public, generously undertook, though aware that he had many difficulties to encounter, and particularly the disadvantage of playing with little preparation a part in which Mr. Talbot, the prime favourite of the Dublin audience, had just before performed with unexampled success. Mrs. Jordan played Bizarre. Her vanity, inflamed by royal cyprianism to arrogance, it is well known, makes her forgetful of herself, and too often betrays her into overbearing petulance. Dwyer happened not to be so quick in the repartee and reciprocation of the dialogue as Mrs. Jordan wished. She took fire and rebuked him on the public stage. Had he tamely borne such a reprimand from any person except from some of the audience, who alone were to be judges of his performance, he must have been more or less than man—he was neither, and he did not bear it. He took instant fire at the rebuke, and on the spot made the imputation recoil upon the person from whom it came. The lady, for whom her *very respectable* connection as well as her undoubted talents (though she be now a little too far fallen into the vale of years,) had raised a host of supporters, construed this into an unpardonable rebellion against her high and contemptuous authority. It was hers, she imagined, to give the law, every other player's to bend to it, and all were to be impeached and condemned as insurgents, who refused to do so. Dwyer, however, was a little too stiff in the back for that kind of *booing*, and brought down upon his head the whole weight of the lady's vengeance. Finding that the sturdy firmness of the man repelled every assault of

her tongue, and defied the power and influence of her abettors, she or they had recourse to the agency of the press, and through that corrupted and licentious medium, issued the most malignant libels, the most false and foul calumnies upon the professional talents of Dwyer, in consequence of which he lost his engagement at Dublin and at Galway. Conscious that his cause was just, and convinced that as such it was entitled to the protection of the laws of his country, he brought an action in the court of common pleas against the printers of *The Weekly Messenger*, to recover compensation in damages for libels reflecting upon the plaintiff as a comedian. This suit he avowedly instituted for the purpose of having the law judicially declared for the protection of injured and insulted actors. The judges thought him right, and applauded his motive; the jury thought him injured and redressed him. He has obtained a triumphant VERDICT OF TWO HUNDRED POUNDS AND COSTS.

Thus has Dwyer entitled himself to the gratitude of all persons of his profession, as Macklin had done before him, for being the champion of their rights and privileges. Upon that occasion lord Mansfield paid old Macklin from the bench many compliments, concluding with that elegant one—"Mr. Macklin, you never *acted* better in your life than you have done this day!" But Dwyer's suit has obtained more for the profession than was got by Macklin's. The decision in Macklin's case going only to protect players from the assaults of proud conspirators in the theatre. That of Dwyer establishing a law forever to protect them from newspaper libels.

We cannot bring ourselves to let this article go to the press without adding to it the concluding words of a speech made on the occasion by Dwyer's advocate, the very able and eloquent counsellor Goold, "It is lamentable to think how much the press has lost of its original purity. THE PRESENT STATE OF THE PRESS PUTS EVERY MAN INTO THE POCKET OF HIS JEALOUS COMPETITOR!"

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#### THE MAID OF HONOUR.

This is of the higher order of Massinger's plays: nor will it be very easy to find in any writer a subject more animated, or characters more variously and pointedly drawn. There is no

delay in introducing the business of the drama; and nothing is allowed to interfere with its progress. Indeed this is by far too rapid; and event is precipitated upon event without regard to time or place. But Massinger acts with a liberty which it would be absurd to criticise. Thebes and Athens, Palermo and Sienna, are alike to him; and he must be allowed to transport his agents and their concerns from one to another, as often as the exigencies of his ambulatory plan may require.

It is observable, that in this play Massinger has attempted the more difficult part of dramatic writing. He is not content with describing different qualities in his characters; but lays before the reader several differences of the same qualities. The courage of Gonzaga, though by no means inferior to it, is not that of Bertoldo. In the former, it is a fixed and habitual principle, the honourable business of his life. In the latter, it is an irresistible impulse, the instantaneous result of a fiery temper. Both characters are again distinguished from Roderigo and Jacomo. These too have courage; but we cannot separate it from a mere vulgar motive, the love of plunder; and in this respect Gonzaga's captains resemble those of Charles, in *the Duke of Milan*. There is still another remove; and all these branches of real courage differ from the poor and forced approaches to valour in Gasparo and Antonio. These distinctions were strongly fixed in Massinger's mind: lest they should pass without due observation, he has made Gonzaga point out some of them, Act II. sc. iii.: and Bertoldo dwells upon others, Act III. sc. i. And in this respect, again he has copied his own caution, already noticed in the observations on *the Renegado*. A broader distinction is used with his two courtiers; and the cold interest of Asutio is fully contrasted with the dazzling and imprudent assumption of Fulgentio. But Camiola herself is the great object that reigns throughout the piece. Every where she animates us with her spirit, and instructs us with her sense. Yet this superiority takes nothing from her softer feelings. Her tears flow with a mingled fondness and regret; and she is swayed by a passion which is only quelled by her greater resolution. The influence of her character is also heightened through the different manner of her lovers; through the mad impatience of the uncontrolled Bertoldo, the glittering pretension of Fulgentio, and the humble and sincere attachment of Adorni, who nourishes

secret desires of an happiness too exalted for him, faithfully performs commands prejudicial to his own views, through the force of an affection which ensures his obedience, and, amidst so much service, scarcely presumes to hint the passion which consumes him. I know not if even signior Sylli is wholly useless here; he serves at least to show her good-humoured toleration of a being hardly important enough for her contempt.

In the midst of this just praise of Camiola, there are a few things to be regretted. Reason and religion had forbidden her union with Bertoldo; and she had declared herself unalterable in her purpose. His captivity reverses her judgment, and she determined not only to liberate, but to marry him. Unfortunately too, she demands a sealed contract as the condition of his freedom; though Bertoldo's ardour was already known to her, and the generosity of her nature ought to have abstained from so degrading a bargain. But Massinger wanted to hinder the marriage of Aurelia; and, with an infelicity which attends many of his contrivances, he provided a prior contract at the expense of the delicacy, as well as the principles, of his heroine. It is well, that the nobleness of the conclusion throws a veil over the blemishes. Her determination is at once natural and unexpected. It answers to the original independence of her character, and she retired with our highest admiration and esteem.

It may be observed here, that Massinger was not unknown to Milton. The date of some of Milton's early poems, indeed, is not exactly ascertained: but if the reader will compare the speech of Paulo, with *the Penseroso*, he cannot fail to remark a similarity in the cadences, as well as in the measure and the solemnity of the thoughts. On many other occasions he certainly remembers Massinger, and frequently in his representations of female purity, and the commanding dignity of virtue.

A noble lesson arises from the conduct of the principal character. A fixed sense of truth and rectitude give genuine superiority; it corrects the proud, and abashes the vain, and marks the proper limits between humility and presumption. It also governs itself with the same ascendancy which it establishes over others. When the lawful objects of life cannot be possessed with clearness of honour, it provides a nobler pleasure in rising above their attraction, and creates a new happiness by controlling even innocent desires.